

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE ORDER OF

CINCINNATUS;

To which are added,

As well several original papers relative to
that institution,

As also

A LETTER from the late M. TURGOT,
COMPTROLLER of the FINANCES in FRANCE,

To DR. PRICE,

On the CONSTITUTIONS of AMERICA;

AND AN ABSTRACT OF DR. PRICE'S
OBSERVATIONS on the IMPORTANCE OF
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION;

With NOTES and REFLECTIONS upon that work.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
THE COUNT DE MIRABEAU.

The glory of soldiers cannot be completed, without
acting well the part of citizens.

Washington's circular Letter.

*Populi imperium juxta libertatem, paucorum dominatio
regiæ libidini propior est.*

Tacitus.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD,

M.DCC.LXXX.V.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

I NEVER printed any thing before the present work, under a name, which my father has rendered it difficult for me to bear. I might be permitted, I thought, not to own the first essays of a man still young, and who, more than others, requires to be matured.

I had still pursued the same line of conduct, and perhaps had never quitted it, but for some well-known events which compelled me to quit my country. I then thought it a duty, which I owed

to myself, not to publish any work in future, that I did not avow. Were I to neglect this precaution, there would not be wanting those who would name me as the author of writings, the best calculated to dishonour me. I protest then, that every publication which shall henceforth appear without my name, will be falsely ascribed to me ; and I hope to convince those, who honour me with their hatred, that I shall not be the more timid for having entered into this engagement.

In the institution of the order of *Gincinnatus*, which is the subject of the following tract, a very considerable revolution has taken place,
of

of which a particular account will be given in the course of this work.

The society of the *Cincinnati* was originally hereditary, and remained so at the time when I began to write. The members have since given up that part of their institution, as will appear by my *Postscript*(1). But as I trust I have myself demonstrated, that the consequences of their institution are still the same, that their dignity will still continue to be hereditary in opinion, which is the true seat of nobility, and that, if the *Cincinnati* be suffered to subsist, it will be impossible to prevent their becoming at least perpetual; and,
as

(1) See p. 108 of the following work.

as the part of this work, which concerns the inheritance of honours, contains perhaps some new ideas, or at least, ideas expressed in a new manner, as well as some important inferences, I thought it would be proper to leave this tract in the order, into which it was originally thrown, before the inheritance of the dignity was abolished; a circumstance, which does not alter the state of the question so much, as some persons would affect to believe.

The idea, and indeed the substance, of this work is taken from a pamphlet but little known in Europe, which appeared at Philadelphia two years ago, under the following

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ing title: *Considerations on the society or order of Cincinnati, lately instituted by the major-generals, brigadier-generals, and officers of the American army, proving that it creates a race of hereditary patri-cians, or nobility; interspersed with remarks on its consequences to the freedom and happiness of the republic: addressed to the people of South-Carolina, and their representatives: by Cassius. Supposed to be written by Ædanus Burke, Esquire, one of the chief justices of the state of South Carolina. Blow ye the trumpet in Zion. Philadelphia, printed for Robert Bell, in Third street.*



INTRODUCTION.

A SOCIETY composed of the generals and officers of the army and navy of the united states of America, has been established in all the provinces which form the American confederation. This society takes the name of the *Cincinnati*, and has already arrived at a very great degree of maturity. Its strength increases every day. It is hereditary, perpetual, richly endowed, and boasts to have the most distinguished personages of America, and particularly General Washington, amongst its members.

Besides the general assembly of the society, which has fixed periodical meetings, in every state is to be established a particular and subordinate assembly; and these again are to be subdivided into such districts, as shall be directed by the state societies. The general assembly is to

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meet

meet annually, on the first Monday in May, and to continue fitting as long as the members of the society shall think proper.

Independently of these annual meetings, an extraordinary assembly is to be held, at least once in every three years. The state societies are to meet on the fourth day of July in every year, or oftener, if they shall find it expedient.

Major General Baron Steuben is appointed grand-master of the order, under the more humble title of president(1); and

(1) The present grand-master is General Washington; as he himself declares in a letter to Monsieur de Rochambeau, dated the 29th of Oct. 1783; in which he speaks of the institution of the *Cincinnati* in these words:

“ SIR,
 “ THE officers of the American army,
 “ in order to perpetuate that mutual friendship which
 “ they contracted in the hour of common danger and
 “ distress, and for other purposes, which are mentioned
 “ in the instrument of their Association, have united
 “ together in a society of friends, under the name of
 “ *Cincinnati*; and, having honoured me with the office
 “ of president, it becomes a very agreeable part of my
 “ duty to inform you, that the society have done them-
 “ selves

and each state society, as well as the general meeting, is to choose a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and assistant-treasurer. The state societies are enjoined to correspond with each other annually by circular letters. The general meeting of the society is to consist of its officers, and of representatives from each state, not exceeding five in number; whose expences are to be borne by the respective state societies.

The *Cincinnati* have also instituted a badge of honour, by which their members are to be known and distinguished. It is a medal of gold in the figure of an eagle, with an inscription on the face and reverse, alluding

“ selves the honour to consider you, and the generals
 “ and officers of the army which you commanded in
 “ America, as members of the society.

“ Major l’Enfant, who will have the honour to deliver
 “ this letter to you, will execute the order of the society
 “ in France, amongst which he is directed to present
 “ you with one of the first orders that are made, and
 “ likewise with orders for the other gentlemen of your
 “ army, which I take the liberty to request you would
 “ present to them in the name of the society. As soon
 “ as the diploma is made out, I will have the honour to
 “ transmit it to you.”

alluding to the time of establishing the order, and to their having saved the republic. This badge of distinction is suspended by a deep blue ribbon edged with white, descriptive of the union between America and France. The ribbon and medal are to be worn by each member of the society, in the same manner as crosses, and other insignia of knighthood, are worn in Europe.

The *Cincinnati* have already conferred the honour and privileges of their order on the French ambassador, on the Sieur Gerard, late minister plenipotentiary of the court of France, on the French generals and admirals who have fought in the cause of America, on the colonels who served on the American continent, and even on the captains of ships in the French fleets. So that the government of France has permitted its subjects to accept of these tokens of adoption into a republic, formed by the insurrection of discontented colonies.

Such is very shortly the subject of the following consideration.

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE ORDER OF

CINCINNATUS.

AT the close of the eighteenth century, at the very moment when America seemed to open an asylum to mankind, and when a revolution the most astonishing, and perhaps the first which philosophy can approve, fixes the attention of all nations upon the other hemisphere, the society of the *Cincinnati* is established throughout the whole continent of America, without the slightest opposition either on the part of the congress, which represents and rules the American confederation, or on the part of any of the United States, or of any body of men in any one of those states (A); nay, without a single individual's daring to make the smallest observation to his fellow citizens, upon an order, perfectly new in its

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kind,



kind, and which must infallibly and speedily change the face of the country, which gives it birth.

The more I reflect on this institution, and on its inevitable consequences, the more astonished I am, that self-created as it is, deeply planned, secretly and rapidly executed, coming upon us in a shape at once so bold and questionable, it awakens not universal attention. Could I, for a single moment, view this order with indifference; were it possible for my understanding, and a selfish philosophy, to assume such command over my heart, I could not but smile to observe those Americans, who, in their town-meetings and committees, declaim with acrimony against inconsiderable evils, exterminate the feeble remnant of a party, which has lost all importance, and drive the tories with fury from their coasts, suffering, with the most supine inattention, an institution to be introduced among them, which must shortly undermine the public weal, their liberty, and their country; strip the middle and lower ranks of life of all influence, and of all importance; consign them to the most palpable contempt, and reduce them to the completest nullity; or,

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at best, to the sad privilege of murmuring, when it will be too late to remedy the evil. So blind, so thoughtless are the multitude!

What then is this order of *Cincinnatus*? To judge by its external appearance, and by the instrument of association, which has been circulated through the different states, it is only
 “ an association, constitution, and combination
 “ of the generals and other officers of the
 “ army, who have served three years, or were
 “ deranged by congress, into a society of
 “ friends, to perpetuate the remembrance of
 “ the revolution, and their own mutual friend-
 “ ship; TO ENDURE AS LONG AS THEY SHALL
 “ ENDURE, OR ANY OF THEIR ELDEST MALE
 “ POSTERITY; and, in failure thereof, THE COL-
 “ LATERAL BRANCHES, WHO MAY BE JUDGED
 “ WORTHY OF BECOMING ITS SUPPORTERS AND
 “ MEMBERS: TO ATTEND INCESSANTLY TO PRE-
 “ SERVE INVIOULATE THOSE EXALTED RIGHTS
 “ AND LIBERTIES OF HUMAN NATURE, for which
 “ they fought and bled: TO PROMOTE AND CHE-
 “ RISH BETWEEN THE RESPECTIVE STATES UNI-
 “ ON AND NATIONAL HONOUR: to render per-
 “ manent cordial affection and the spirit of bro-
 “ therly kindness among the officers: and to ex-

“ tend acts of beneficence towards those officers
 “ and their families, who may unfortunately be
 “ under the necessity of receiving it.” Every
 member advances a month’s pay for this purpose;
 and the institution is of such a nature, that, for
 the increase of its funds, donations are received
 even from persons, who are not of the society.

So that, as the deputies, who represent each
 state-society, form by one convocation the ge-
 neral assembly, or the congress, of this order;
 in like manner the funds, destined to an object
 of charity or of generosity, in which all Ame-
 ricans are permitted and invited to concur,
 form a treasure at the disposal of the associa-
 tion (B).

And, to complete its stability and strength,
 the society have established the following rule:
 “ AS THERE ARE, AND WILL AT ALL TIMES BE,
 “ MEN IN THE RESPECTIVE STATES, EMINENT
 “ FOR THEIR ABILITIES AND PATRIOTISM,
 “ WHOSE VIEWS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE SAME
 “ LAUDABLE OBJECTS WITH THOSE OF THE CIN-
 “ CINNATI, IT SHALL BE A RULE TO ADMIT
 “ SUCH CHARACTERS AS HONORARY MEMBERS
 “ OF THE SOCIETY FOR THEIR OWN LIVES ONLY:
 “ PRO-

“ PROVIDED ALWAYS, THAT THE NUMBER OF
 “ HONORARY MEMBERS IN EACH STATE DOES
 “ NOT EXCEED A RATIO OF ONE TO FOUR OF
 “ THE OFFICERS, OR THEIR DESCENDANTS.”

This deep-laid policy manifestly tends to interest the chiefs of each state in an association, from which are tacitly excluded all those members of society, whose poverty (which even in republics is real plebeianism) stifles their talents, and deprives them of respect. Thus the man of the people, and of the army, General Washington, is already an honorary member of the order (C), which, to guard its existence no doubt from attacks, solicits recruits and supporters in all the monarchies of Europe. His natural caution, which seems to be the distinguishing characteristic, and the first merit, of this celebrated man, kept him neutral between his country and the *Cincinnati*, only while the association was not completely formed. On the very day when the adoption of honorary members was voted, Washington, who had appeared so great, declaring that he would become again a private individual; Washington, the first citizen of the republic, and the deliverer of the people, was ambitious of being

distinguished from that people. Was it possible that, he should not feel how much his name was superior to all distinction? The hero of the revolution, which broke the chains of half the world, was it possible that he should not scorn the guilty, dangerous, and vulgar honour, of being the hero of a party?

If the honorary adoption of the most eminent men in the state be a politic and formidable combination, the same depth of policy is to be found in the singular proportion, which the instrument of association establishes between the honorary and the other members of the order. The *Cincinnati* have taken care that the honorary members should not constitute above a fifth part of their body. They have taken care to have the people under their control, by means of those, to whom the government is entrusted, and to reserve to themselves a power of overawing that government by their numbers and their military force.

Military force has been the sole object of their thoughts, because it was the mighty instrument of their projects. With this view it was, that the inheritance of honour was reserved to

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none but military men. In the true spirit of a prætorian band, they scrupled not to be unjust towards the most distinguished of their coadjutors, who were prevented from taking arms by duties no less important. They have presumed to judge that the glory of the head ought to be subordinate to that of the arm, and that the descendants of sufficiently honoured by a temporary distinction, ought afterwards to be confounded in the vulgar mass of plebeians (D).

Perhaps, indeed, they would totally cast off those wise and magnanimous citizens, so truly worthy to be the founders of states; perhaps they dread their far-sighted wisdom.

Not but that I am fully convinced, that very many of the officers, who have not narrowly examined the spirit and the consequences of the institution, are actuated by none but the most honourable motives of patriotism, friendship, and humanity, which they consider as the basis of their union, not to say their league.

But as there are among them many, equal in knowledge and abilities to the most distinguished characters in America, it is very diffi-

cult to conceive, that none of them should have seen farther into the nature of so serious an innovation. Such indifference, such blindness in a nation, who have but newly won their liberty by the sword, is surely not in nature.

I will not fear then to speak, and to speak out boldly, in the face of America, and of the world. I will not fear to rouse my fellow citizens to this important object. Perhaps I may yet dispel that illusion, which fascinates those, who, not intending it, are overturning the constitution of their country, and are incurring the guilt of a crime which they little suspect. If they are still worthy of that liberty, which they have defended, they will acknowledge the service with gratitude, and will rejoice to be delivered from an involuntary error. I will not fear to say;

THE institution of the order of *Cincinnatus*, such as in their own words I have stated it to be, is the creation of an actual patriciate, and of a military nobility, which will, ere long, become a civil nobility, and an aristocracy the more dangerous, because, being hereditary, it will perpetually

petually increase in the course of time, and will gather strength from the very prejudices which it will engender: because, originating neither in the constitution nor the law, the law has provided no means to control it, and it will incessantly overbear the constitution, of which it forms no part; till the time shall come, when, by repeated attempts made, sometimes clandestinely, and sometimes openly, it will, at length, have incorporated itself into the constitution, or when, after having for a long time sapped its foundations, it will in the end overturn and utterly destroy it.

If this be doubted, let us appeal to history; and let us trace the origin and progress of similar establishments. Observe the Roman aristocracy, which caused such devastation. Its source is scarcely discernable. A society of men, living in the purest simplicity, of perfect equality in their fortunes, and possessed of so little, that the landed property of each did not exceed two acres, chose a few old men for their magistrates. The only distinction of these magistrates was their age, their experience, and the love which they were presumed to bear towards the people. Hence they received
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the name of **FATHERS** (*Patres*). Soon the descendants of these plain and rustic men considered themselves as distinct from their fellow citizens, nourished high pretensions, assumed exclusive privileges, formed confederacies between particular families, and cemented them by inter-marriages (E); and this policy alone, without titles or ensigns of honour, established in Rome a body of nobility, so enflamed with the lust of dominion (F), that upon the expulsion of their kings, the people gained scarce any thing by the revolution, which, for the most part, they had themselves accomplished. For the patrician families having united in their own hands the power of the monarch, and the influence of the nobles, each patrician became a Tarquin, and Rome enjoyed no more political liberty than it had done before (G); with this difference, however, that the tyranny now resided in a body, and that a thousand tyrants are a scourge a thousand times more dreadful and more formidable than a single tyrant. For a single tyrant is under the restraint of self-interest, or the control of remorse, or public opinion; but a body of men looks not to its interest, feels not remorse, and decks itself with glory, when it most deserves disgrace.

Thus

Thus did the PATRICIATE grow up in Rome, and such was its origin; an origin as much inferior to the institution of the *Cincinnati* as the chiefs of a banditti, living upon plunder, and building hovels upon the soil where Rome now stands, were inferior to a body of such illustrious commanders as Washington, Green, Gates, Moultrie, Waynes, and many others, who have been entrusted with the defence and the political interests of a mighty nation, of a nation well seen in all the arts of war and peace, and maintaining from the first hour of its political existence a distinguished rank amidst the powers of the earth. If the patricians of Rome, in the infancy of the republic, may be compared to a scanty spring, which is yet the parent of a desolating river, the *Cincinnati* are the river already formed, large, deep, and terrible,

As to the nobility of modern Europe, what were they in their origin? The chiefs of ferocious warriors, who united barbarity of conquest with barbarity of manners; whose first rights were those of usurpation (H) and plunder, and who founded their pre-eminence merely upon the command, which they exercised in war, Thus was the field of battle the nursery
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of this nobility : a singular, a striking, and an alarming feature of resemblance with the order of the *Cincinnati*.

Hence issued forth that swarm of counts, dukes, and marquises, which over-ran and desolated Europe. All those titles of human vanity were, in their origin, nothing more than military titles, denoting different degrees of command ; but soon they became splendid distinctions and privileges in civil life. Soon they laid the foundation of that barbarous feudal system, which for ages debased all human kind, converted whole nations into herds of slaves, and a few individuals into broods of tyrants.

POSTERI ! POSTERI ! VESTRA RES AGITUR—was an inscription carved at Naples upon a pillar erected after an eruption of mount Vesuvius, in which many thousand inhabitants perished : an inscription which I would have engraved upon the insignia of the fatal order which is instituting amongst us.

Yes, it is that nobility of barbarians, the price of blood, the offspring of the sword, the
fruit

fruit of conquest, that the *Cincinnati* desire to establish in their country, which notwithstanding they have not conquered, and which confided in them for its defence! The distinctions of Celts and Ostrogoths are what they claim for their inheritance! Honours, invented by the chiefs of savages, are objects of ambition to the heroes of a free people, and of an enlightened age! They usurp the patriciate of victory! They usurp it; and, in the very creation of their order, mingle with it that corruptive refinement, which the progress of feudal principles introduced into Europe, decorations and insignia! the eternal badges of party to the factions! the seeds of contagious vanity among one class of citizens, and of servile subordination among the rest! the never-failing sources of corruption to human nature!

If one consider all those orders of knighthood, which the *Cincinnati* affect to imitate in the new world, and in the heart of a republic, almost all of them will be found to have originated in absurdity, baseness, or superstition. I leave the detail to history (I), and proceed to display the effects of these institutions.

Not

Not even the contempt which their origin ought to have provoked, has been able to prevent the pride and mean vanity of man from eagerly grasping at these new honours. They have become a fresh token of inequality; a new mark, which capriciously establishes additional ranks and exclusions in states, where the common mass of citizens is already overloaded, dishonoured, and abashed by numberless civil distinctions. They have created ranks even among the nobility, founded a new patriciate among patricians, a new pride in pride itself, and new means of oppression in the midst of oppression. A part of these haughty patricians, of these descendants of warriors and Gothic tyrants, are become themselves a kind of populace compared with those of their order, whom the prince's grace, his accidental favour, or a slavish compliance with the caprice of courts, has decorated with these tinsel ornaments. These, in fine, are the ensigns, which, in every state in Europe, have marshalled around the throne new instruments of despotism, ever ready to sacrifice the rights of nations to the expectations of their own vanity, and to sell a people for a ribband (K).

Such

Such is the fatal power of opinion, and of the little passions of the human heart, that the most trivial ornaments have helped to rivet the chains of nations, and have ennobled and rewarded the servitude of the great, the better to aggravate the servitude of the poor; that even the colour of a ribband, and the form of a star, affect the character and dispositions of men's minds, excite respect or meanness in some, and pride in others; widen or contract the distances between men, and seem to bring forward glaring to the sight that artificial inequality which usurpation and insolence originally impressed upon the imaginations of the weak and abject. Hence the spectacle so frequent from one end of Europe to the other, the spectacle so indecent, so scandalous, of a good man compelled to bow down his head before the ensigns of honour, prostituted to men the most dishonourable, while he who bears them is sometimes angry with himself for the shame he feels, and is shocked that he can still blush.

Such, we may be assured, are the evils which threaten our posterity, and of which the first seed is now sown, in the imitation of the dangerous European institution of a nobility, composed

posed originally of a troop of robbers and assassins, and recruited from time to time with public defaulters, and plunderers of the people (L).

For if a nobility founded merely on an abstract distinction, if I may so express myself, possess such powers of corruption, and of stimulating the desire, and facilitating the means, of dominion; if it can gradually so temper men's minds to slavery or tyranny; what consequences are not to be dreaded from the same nobility, when to its pre-eminence are added external ornaments, and visible distinctions?

Man is naturally attached to forms: he constantly associates the sign with the idea it represents, and often substitutes the one for the other. He is so enslaved to outward signs, that an exact conformity with established forms is, in his estimation, far more important than sincere sentiments, virtuous motives, or generous actions, which appear only in their natural form, and disdain alike the falsehood of an assumed deportment, and that of a hypocritical exaggeration. Hence proceed prejudices, dependence, servile imitation, and uniformity of manners,

manners, opinions, and habits, the constant fore-runners of slavery.

An unconquerable and high-minded pride; a firm and untameable courage; a freedom of principle and of thought, which bends only to reason, and repels all other empire; an independence, which yields neither to the pleasures, nor to the pains of opinion; pleasures most delusive, and pains most pungent in the season of the passions, because with the passions they correspond or clash: such is the soul of a republican. To die rather than change: such is his motto. He is pledged to nature, his country, and himself, to endure every present, and to disregard every future evil, rather than bend the knee a single moment; to trample under foot every thing that shakes his principles, or obstructs his duties; to sacrifice all to these; fortune, affections, passions, glory itself; to reject all protectors disguised under the name of friends; to be no man's who is not his; assistance for assistance; zeal for zeal; friendship for friendship; but above all liberty, virtue, and his country: to declare his sentiments openly by words or actions; to regard as illusory with respect to himself all that he finds not

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within



Within himself, all that depends only on opinion, every thing that his reason does not confirm, or his heart approve; to value himself only upon his firmness in maintaining his own rights, and his justice in respecting those of others; in a word to be himself, to be himself alone, and to esteem himself for nothing but what is his own. . . . What has such a man as this to do with insignia, with forms, distinctions, conventional superiorities, exclusive privileges, and factitious homage? They can only serve to shock and afflict, or to weaken and corrupt him.

All external signs are formidable, and produce a great effect upon the weak imaginations of men. By striking their sight one may at pleasure inspire them with any passions. By external signs it is that religion, fanaticism, sovereignty, rebellion, and faction, maintain an ascendant over the understandings of men, and hurry away a headlong multitude whose senses overpower their reason. By external signs have been prepared and accomplished many state revolutions, in favour as well of liberty as of tyranny. External signs muster in a moment under the same banner thousands of men who
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were but now dispersed ; inspire them with one will, one soul ; and precipitate them all together towards one and the same object.

But external signs are the more powerful in proportion as they awaken ideas more or less noble, more or less calculated to strike the imagination, and agitate the soul. In our case what are the ideas united to the institution of the order ? Those of battles and of victories, of blood shed for one's country, of tyrants vanquished, and of public liberty protected by the sword !

What an influence must such ideas, manifested by a token visible to all men, have, as well upon those, whom it will constantly remind of their own or of their ancestors glory, as upon the ordinary class of men, whom every species of glory, even that which is not founded on real services, dazzles and awes into a kind of adoration ! Is there, I would be told, in the annals of all mankind, any nobility whose origin can boast such splendid titles ? But the brighter their splendor, the more reason have I to fear for my country. The nobler the ideas, with which these visible distinctions are associated,

the more ought I to dread, that they will establish among us a new order of citizens, incompatible with our constitutions and our laws.

All distinguishing signs, which may serve suddenly to assemble a numerous body of men, which may create a partial interest in the public interest, which may separate a certain number of citizens from the body of their fellow-citizens, are by their effects much more formidable in a republic than in a monarchy, of which slavery, more or less wretched, more or less disguised, is, after all, the master-piece, and the everlasting scope (M).

In a monarchy every thing tends to elevation: in a republic every thing ought to tend to equality. In the former, ranks are necessary: in the latter, virtues. In the one it is good that the citizens be divided into distinct bodies: their partial interests may supply the place of the general interest; their emulation, even by being a source of division, may render them useful, and cannot be dangerous, because it is confined on every side by the weight of sovereign authority. But in the other, whatever divides, weakens; whatever rises above
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the common level, weighs down the rest: there must be but one body, and one interest: nothing must govern, and every thing must be equally governed: every citizen must see nothing beneath him but vice, nothing above him but the law.

External marks of distinction are naturalised in monarchies, and their influence is, from this very circumstance, the less dangerous. There, all is pomp and pageantry, from the monarch's throne, through all those intermediate ranks, which fill up the interval between him and the people, down to the private soldier, who defends or destroys the state. But all outward marks of distinction are repugnant to the spirit of a republic. Liberty has an elevated pride, which all distinctions offend. In her presence nothing must be eminently conspicuous: all must be confounded in one undistinguished mass. She cannot even behold these ornaments without terror: if they are worn by only one description of citizens, her terror redoubles. To dispel her fear, there is but one expedient; that of degrading the honours themselves by the prostitution of them. But if the solitary body of men, who dare thus to distinguish themselves from their fellow-citizens, be a body of soldiers, all is lost. Li-

erty will not linger long in climates disgraced by such distinctions.

What! when in the republics of antiquity, the victorious warrior was impatient to throw off all distinctions, and to mingle in the crowd of citizens! when he was eager to extinguish his glory, and to change for the garb of peace his warlike habiliments, stained with his own blood, and adorned with the blood of the enemy! What! when even the empire of violence takes alarm at military distinctions! When under the legionary despotism of the emperors, the heroes of the last ages of Rome were fearful of appalling by their victories a tyranny, which had no foundation but that of arms, and mixing in the throng of slaves, endeavoured by their modesty to obtain forgiveness of their victories! What! when in England, of which we have but just thrown off the yoke, and which ought at least to instruct us by its example, liberty jealous of every thing thinks it necessary to keep its troops far from the bosom of the island, and, by its laws and the spirit of its constitution, weakens, as much as may be, that general respect, which in the rest of Europe is paid to the profession of arms! . . . Shall there amongst us, in a new-born state, in
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a common-wealth, which recalls man as much as possible to the primitive rights of nature and of liberty, ten thousand warriors, at the very moment when their country no longer needs their assistance, as if they had conquered for themselves alone, endeavour to erect themselves into a durable, or rather an immortal body in the state ! create for themselves an hereditary distinction, unauthorised by law ! seek to live in the latest posterity ! exact as it were respect and homage from generations yet unborn ! dare to establish a common mark of distinction for themselves, and all their descendants, by which the whole body may be known, and may be marshalled together, at a moment's warning, from one end of America to another !

Assuredly, if we had not reason to esteem, as we do, our gallant defenders ; if we were not persuaded that in this project they have been misled by an error incident to great souls, by the enthusiasm and by the intoxication of glory ; we should not hesitate to point them out to the new world, and to its dawning liberty, as the most formidable of enemies. Thank heaven, they still love freedom and their country ; that freedom which they have vindicated, that country which they have

rescued from its tyrants. But even their sentiments and their virtues cannot quiet our alarms. Those virtues, will they too be hereditary? Will they be transmitted to their descendants, together with their titles and their orders? Those virtues, which are at present kept alive by the roused attention of either hemisphere, by the successful fanaticism of a mighty revolution, by recent scenes of glory, by the gratitude of a whole people, by the deep-fixed remembrance of oppressions and of wrongs; by wounds which still bleed, and will not for a long time be closed; by the pride of conscious worth, which cannot bear the thought of falsifying its character: those virtues, will they not be weakened of necessity by removal from the causes of them; by the slow but inevitable corruption of time; by the more rapid corruption of affluence and luxury; by the lethargy of peace, which relaxes every energy? For, it is but too certain, the greatest danger to republics, is to have no danger to dread. Will they resist the seduction of power, that eternal disease of man, who is weary of obedience as soon as he descends the means of command? of man, who demands equality, but whom all equality torments, and who struggles perpetually to shun it? Those
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virtues, in short, will they resist the ascendant of that institution, which I am bold to combat? For every institution has in its very essence a certain insurmountable force, tending to good or evil, according to the direction given it at its creation; a force often inscrutable in its origin, which unfolds itself by degrees, which prevails at all times, tempers different characters, and directs or produces events; a force the more irresistible, because it exists altogether in the nature of things, and is almost entirely independent of persons, whom it sometimes commands and hurries away, without their even suspecting its influence.

Thus was it that in Rome the pre-eminence conferred on a few old men prepared the way for all the madness of the aristocracy, the establishment of tribunes, the perpetual clashing of patricians and plebeians, the transfer of the legislative power to ten magistrates, the tyranny of the decemviri, the right of governing the provinces for many years successively, the venality of the army, which then had only chiefs, and no longer a country, and which was at all times ready to support every sanguinary faction; till, at length, the establishment of a civil
and

and military chief under the name of emperor, who was, after all, only the too powerful head of a too-powerful aristocracy (N), by seeming to restore order, subverted the firmest and best constituted common-wealth, and prepared the way for times the most horrible, that are recorded in the history of nations; times when human nature exhausted all that tyranny can dare, or slavery can endure.

Such is the secret force of institutions, which nothing can check, and which advance unseen, but with a certain progress, towards an end which is inevitable, and which is often unperceived even to their founders. It is this all-powerful force, which, in the present institution of the *Cincinnati*, prepares for us, without their knowledge, and against their will (yes: it is what they could not prevent, were they so inclined, but by self-destruction), which prepares for us a patriciate, an hereditary, or a perpetual nobility; or, in other words, the total subversion of our constitution, and our laws: for, after having considered the alarming effects of this institution, after having seen what it is in its origin, and what it may and necessarily must become, it is now time to bring it to the test of
our

our constitution, and of the principles adopted in our laws.

The delegates, the representatives, the legislators of the nations of America, have taken for the basis of their insurrection, of their labours, of their claims, of their rights, and of their laws, EQUALITY. By this right it is that they have claimed "*among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature, and of nature's God entitle them* (1)." All the states of the confederation have declared in their constitutions, that "*men are born free and EQUAL* (2); and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights," of which they cannot, by any compact, deprive their posterity; "that all government of right originates

(1) "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and EQUAL STATION, to which the laws of nature, and of nature's God entitle them, &c." *Declaration of independence, July 4th, 1776.*

(2) *Massachusetts constitution, part I. art. I. Pennsylvania constitution, chap. I. art. I. &c.*

“ ginates from THE PEOPLE (3); that no autho-
 “ rity can be exercised over THE PEOPLE, but
 “ such as shall be derived from and granted by
 “ THE PEOPLE (4); that the several magistrates
 “ and officers of government, vested with autho-
 “ rity, whether legislative, executive, or judi-
 “ cial, are the trustees, substitutes, agents, and
 “ servants of THE PEOPLE (5), AND ARE AT ALL
 “ TIMES ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PEOPLE (6);
 “ that the end of the institution, maintenance,
 “ and administration of all government (which
 “ is, and ought to be instituted only for the
 “ common benefit, protection, and security of
 “ THE PEOPLE, NATION, OR COMMUNITY, and
 “ not for the particular emolument of any *single*
 “ *man, family, or SET OF MEN, who are a part*
 “ only of that (7) COMMUNITY), is to secure the
 “ exist-

(3) *Delaware declaration of rights, art. I. Maryland declaration of rights, art. I. and the constitutions of the other states, passim.*

(4) *New York constitution, art. I. and the other constitutions, passim.*

(5) *Massachusetts constitution, part I. art. V. Pennsylvania constitution, chap. I. art. IV. Delaware declaration of rights, art. V. Maryland declaration of rights, art. IV.*

(6) *Ibid.*

(7) *Pennsylvania constitution, chap. I. art. V.*

“ existence of the body-politic, to protect it,
 “ and to furnish THE INDIVIDUALS WHO COM-
 “ POSE IT with the power of enjoying, in safety
 “ and tranquillity, THEIR NATURAL RIGHTS;
 “ that every body-politic is formed, in the first
 “ place, by a voluntary association of indivi-
 “ duals, who have entered into a mutual en-
 “ gagement; and, in the next place, by a social
 “ compact, in which THE WHOLE PEOPLE COVE-
 “ nants with EACH CITIZEN, and EACH CITIZEN
 “ with the WHOLE PEOPLE, that all shall be go-
 “ verned by certain laws, IN ONE UNIFORM
 “ MANNER (8), for the COMMON GOOD (9);
 “ THAT THE RIGHT IN THE PEOPLE TO PARTI-
 “ CIPATE IN THE LEGISLATURE IS THE BEST
 “ SECURITY OF LIBERTY, AND THE FOUNDA-
 “ TION OF ALL FREE GOVERNMENT (10); that,
 “ WHENEVER THE ENDS OF GOVERNMENT ARE
 “ PERVERTED, THE PEOPLE MAY, AND OF RIGHT
 “ OUGHT TO, REFORM THE OLD, OR ESTABLISH
 “ A NEW GOVERNMENT; the doctrine of non-
 “ resistance against arbitrary power and oppres-
 sion

(8) *Virginia constitution, art. XVI.*

(9) *Preamble to the constitutions of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.*

(10) *Maryland declaration of rights, art. V.*

“ sion being absurd, slavish, and destructive of
 “ the good and happiness of mankind (11).”

Such are the general principles of the federate union of America, faithfully transcribed from their constitution (O). I open the codes of the respective states, and I read these words :

“ MONOPOLIES ARE ODISIOUS, CONTRARY TO
 “ THE SPIRIT OF A FREE GOVERNMENT
 “ AND OUGHT NOT TO BE SUFFERED (12).—
 “ NO MAN, OR SET OF MEN, ARE INTITLED TO
 “ EXCLUSIVE OR SEPARATE EMOLUMENTS, OR
 “ PRIVILEGES, FROM THE COMMUNITY (3) (P).
 “ EVERY FREEMAN, TO PRESERVE HIS INDEPEN-
 “ DENCE (IF WITHOUT A SUFFICIENT ESTATE),
 “ OUGHT TO HAVE SOME PROFESSION, CALLING,
 “ TRADE, OR FARM, WHEREBY HE MAY HO-
 “ NESTLY SUBSIST. THERE CAN BE NO NECES-
 “ SITY FOR, NOR USE IN ESTABLISHING OFFICES
 “ OF PROFIT; THE USUAL EFFECTS OF WHICH
 “ ARE

(11) *Maryland declaration of rights, art. IV. Dela-
 ware declaration of rights, art. V.*

(12) *Maryland declaration of rights, art. XXXIX.*

(13) *North Carolina declaration of rights, art. III.*

“ ARE DEPENDENCE AND SERVILITY, UNBECOMING FREEMEN, IN THE POSSESSORS AND EXPECTANTS; FACTION, CONTENTION, CORRUPTION, AND DISORDER AMONG THE PEOPLE (14). WHENEVER AN OFFICE, THROUGH INCREASE OF FEES OR OTHERWISE, BECOMES SO PROFITABLE AS TO OCCASION MANY TO APPLY FOR IT, THE PROFITS OUGHT TO BE LESSENED BY THE LEGISLATURE (15).—TITLES BEING IN NATURE NEITHER HEREDITARY NOR TRANSMISSIBLE TO CHILDREN OR DESCENDANTS, OR RELATIONS BY BLOOD, THE IDEA OF A MAN BORN A MAGISTRATE, LAWGIVER, OR JUDGE, IS ABSURD AND UNNATURAL (16).—IT IS DANGEROUS TO ESTABLISH AN ARISTOCRACY (17).—NO TITLE OF NOBILITY OR HEREDITARY HONOURS OUGHT TO BE GRANTED (18).”

Natural equality: political equality: civil equality. Such then is the doctrine of the legislators

(14) *Pennsylvania constitution, chap. II. art. XXXVI.*

(15) *Ibid.*

(16) *Massachusetts constitution, part I. art. VI.*

(17) *Pennsylvania constitution, part II. art. XIX.*

(18) *Maryland declaration of rights, art. XL, and the other constitutions, passim.*

lators of America (Q). If they could not foresee that kind of conspiracy, which has brought forth the order of *Cincinnati*, they were well aware, at least, of that ambitious vanity, which has given it birth, and in every point of view they have proscribed it.

NO MONOPOLIES: THEY ARE ODIOUS.—What monopoly can be more fatal, more hostile to the spirit of a common-wealth, than that of respect, of influence, and of power? What monopoly is more unjust, and more alarming, than that, which forms an illegal association, confers unconstitutional privileges, and exclusive ensigns of honour, than that, in short, which incorporates into a body ten thousand of the most distinguished characters in America?

THE IDEA OF A MAN BORN A MAGISTRATE, LAWGIVER, OR JUDGE, IS ABSURD AND UNNATURAL.—That of a man born the protector of his country is still more so.

NO OFFICES OF PROFIT, NO SEPARATE EMOLUMENTS.—Those distinctions, that confer honours and power, with which money is soon acquired (though money alone in countries which have

have not yet sunk to the lowest degree of corruption, will not always procure power), will more effectually destroy equality, and more easily provoke the rapacity of soldiers, than offices of profit.

NO TITLES OF NOBILITY: NO HEREDITARY HONOURS AN ARISTOCRACY MUST BE DANGEROUS AND INCONVENIENT.— I have already proved that the institution of the *Cincinnati*, or, in other words, an association of military officers, distinguished by brilliant services, and possessing the exclusive right of wearing, and of transmitting to their posterity, the ensigns and the privileges of the order, which they confer upon themselves, into which too they admit foreign fellow-soldiers, men subject to other laws, accustomed to other manners, and prejudiced in favour of other governments; I have proved, I say, that such a union among citizens of a common-wealth, who ought to be equal, and who thus assume a real superiority over their fellow-citizens, and take party signals, to whatever motives it be ascribed, with whatever specious names it be decorated, is not in fact, nor can by its consequences, be any thing but the institution of

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an HEREDITARY NOBILITY, the creation of a peerage in favour of the *Cincinnati*, and the heirs male of their bodies, with remainder in default of such issue to their collateral heirs.

The *Cincinnati* are then NOBLES, ARISTOCRATICS, actual Patricians, TRUE PEERS OF THE REALM: *PARES REGNI*.

Nor do the particular laws of each state alone inhibit an order of men and of things, so destructive of equality: the sixth article of the general confederation, the fundamental law of the political existence of the American states, contains this express provision:

NOR SHALL THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, NOR ANY OF THEM, GRANT ANY TITLE OF NOBILITY.

The order of *Cincinnatus* then usurps and confers a nobility, which is neither granted, nor permitted by the law; it confers it in violation and in defiance of the ordinances of the congress, and of the states, which have denied themselves any such power. It declares war against its country.

What

What though the institution have not received, nor can yet receive, the sanction of the legislature, that circumstance only renders its consequences the more alarming. For had the order of *Cincinnatus* been created by the congress (R), or by the particular legislatures of the United States, it would have mortally wounded the constitution, it is true; but it would have wounded it in a legal manner, and we should, at least, have known, what these *Cincinnati*, these earls, dukes, and peers, sanctioned by congress, were to be. We should have circumscribed their pretensions, and limited the extent of their exclusive privileges, and of their authority. But the *Cincinnati* are self-created. Like the despots who hold their power by no other tenure than their will and their sword, they were warriors, and would brook no limits to their pretensions: they would owe nothing but to the ambitious terms, which they alone had dictated, and to the existence, which they had created for themselves, and their posterity.

Instituted by a manifest infringement of a fundamental law of the union, if once they be permitted to exist, they will not want the sanction

of law to insure their stability. Courage and firmness cannot fail them. If they resist with perseverance the feeble opposition which they may encounter; if they persuade the world that their institution is only a flattering and unimportant ornament (and such is the judgment of the vulgar); if they have but patience, dexterity, subtilty, and pliability enough to conceal their deep designs under the pious title, and the alluring disguise, of a charitable subscription, so as but to gain the point of being tolerated for a few years; if even, with a deference, the mere creature of policy, they consent, or be constrained, to modify the institution, which, with wonderful address, they have founded in perpetuity, they will soon be able to bid open defiance to all opponents. For the smallest branch of this institution cannot be endured without, as it were, communicating life to every part of it. To indemnify the *Cincinnati* for having distinguished themselves from their fellow-citizens, to allow them to wear those distinctions, though but for a time, and to form a distinct body, though but for a moment, and merely for a charitable purpose, will be to reward a violation of the laws of the common-wealth, and to sanctify a crime, which calls for punishment. It
will

will be impossible to prevent the lustre of hereditary honour from reflecting on the posterity of the *Cincinnati*. The medal, which their descendants must not presume to wear, will be carefully preserved in each family's domestic treasury, and will transmit and perpetuate a sentiment of pride, which will prevent them from marrying into the families of their fellow-citizens, their equals, and, perhaps, their superiors in merit, but who will not be so fortunate as to have had ancestors among the officers of the army at the time of the revolution. These kinds of inequality, founded on a childish vanity, which obstruct the natural course of honourable love, which keep asunder those, whom heaven seems to have formed for each other, and who cannot find in any other connection that happiness which their affections promised them, form one of the cruelest calamities that afflicts Europe, and which by marriages, both physically and morally ill-combined, depraves generations, and those most, which are the most illustrious, and which are thus punished for their pride, without being cured of it. The same causes will ever produce the same effects. The next generation of the *Cincinnati* will be as deeply intoxicated with the pre-eminence of

its blood ; the patriciate will be as firmly rooted in each potent family, and as completely incorporated into the government, as any other order of nobility in any of the kingdoms of Europe. A keen and fervid ambition, the lust of power, and the extravagance of pride, have planted this mighty tree, whose branches will soon overshadow tyranny. It is the spirit of nobility always to consider itself as alone constituting society. In less than a century this institution, which draws a line of separation between the descendants of the *Cincinnati* and their fellow-citizens, will have caused so great an inequality, that the country which now contains none but citizens, perfectly equal in the eye of the constitution and of the law, will consist altogether of two classes of men; PATRICIANS: and PLEBEIANS.

Such is the natural, imminent, and infallible effect of an establishment, whose upstart origin and anti-republican tendency, afford us the most melancholy prospect of futurity. To create a nobility, to violate, and consequently to destroy our constitution, at the very moment when we are taking our political flight upon the wings of liberty, what is it but
a kind

a kind of sacrilege, and a guilty profanation of that liberty, which heaven has permitted us to assert? what is it but to pervert the blessings of providence to our own destruction?

No: I do not deceive myself. Every circumstance conspires to establish and confirm the force of this association.

THE NUMBER OF ITS MEMBERS—which already amounts to near ten thousand (S); and the order openly declares an intention of adopting all those who shall be distinguished by *their talents*, and *their reputation*; that is to say, all whose offices, authority, or other qualifications, will bring respect to the order. If each member have but personal influence enough to command three retainers faithful to his interests, his principles, and his opinions (and the calculation cannot be thought extravagant), in a moment we see embodied a band of forty thousand chosen men, which will increase with every generation. To whom will they not give the law?

MILITARY FORCE—which is of all others the most fatal to equality. Numerous, warlike,

taught by actual service every advantage or disadvantage of their country, for attack or defence, and even the personal characters of all their fellow-soldiers whom they have commanded. Superior to the rest of their fellow-citizens, superior even to the laws, which their very existence insults, and proves to be impotent, what scruples will they, or need they, entertain? The power and authority of the different bodies of the republic, and of the different branches of the legislature, will increase or diminish at their pleasure. If any ambitious leader, if any powerful faction shall threaten the freedom of the commons; if the congress itself, under political circumstances, which it is not barely possible, but easy to foresee, shall come to have a revenue, a fleet, and an army at its disposal, and shall make an attempt on our liberties, will the *Cincinnati* pursue any other line of conduct than that which will the best suit their own armed order? And will not their weight of necessity preponderate?

RESPECT—necessarily attendant upon great services rendered to the state, and upon the grateful memory of brilliant actions exaggerated by national pride, and by the natural avidity of man

man for what is wonderful ; a force which it is impossible to calculate, and which may transform gratitude and glory into instruments of servitude and tyranny.

THE RIGHT OF INHERITANCE—which immortalizes the danger, nay, augments it from generation to generation, and from age to age, by the new weight, which time always gives to a prejudice that becomes inveterate ; by that seeming sanction, which antiquity stamps upon every establishment ; by the interest of ambition, which it infuses not merely into the individuals decorated with the order, but into whole families, where sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, and the remotest collateral posterity, may one day or other aspire to the same honour, and the same hopes, and will therefore form in the state a kind of eternal league, and an uninterrupted conspiracy of generations and of families, to maintain, perpetuate, and even enlarge these privileges and rights, which will have been once established : in a word, a PERPETUAL ARISTOCRACY. And whether the order be created by the legislature, in which alone the legal power of instituting it, by reforming the law of the union, resides ; or be usurped by citizens, by
chosen

chosen warriors, united in close intimacy with the most celebrated officers of Europe; the consequences are much the same: they are infinitely pernicious. The respect naturally paid to illustrious, ancient, and opulent families, the weight and reputation necessarily resulting from so powerful an association, will be perpetuated with the patriciate; and, when so many advantages are once obtained, what family will ever have the courage, or even the thought, to renounce them? When the present generation shall have quitted the stage of life, when the descendants of these self-created patri-cians shall no longer struggle with the adversity which their fathers have encountered, and which should have taught them that liberty cannot be maintained but by a political union, founded on equality, will the children of these demigods, who are raised so high above their countrymen, condescend to quit their elevation? Will they sink back to the level of those, whom they may have for vassals? Will they prefer an equal democracy to the exclusive advantages of aristocratical government, which can fall into no other hands than their own? Assuredly no. An order, which by its constitution, its extent, and its connections, must have

have the greatest influence in the state, will cabal, conspire, and destroy the government, rather than relinquish its privileges; or, rather, it will be itself the government.

THE RIGHT OF HOLDING AT PLEASURE, OR AT STATED PERIODS, PARTICULAR AND GENERAL ASSEMBLIES.—A right which constitutes a body; which would be sufficient to create one, were it not already established; which collects together every various ambition, and every different interest, and, as it were, enlists them under one banner; which kindles, and keeps them alive, by the animating spectacle of their united strength; which entertains, nourishes, and causes to ferment a dangerous zeal for the order; and which combines a multitude of solitary passions into one passion, more active and more ardent than the rest, and the more dangerous, because all these men assembled together will conceive themselves to represent the most considerable, when, in fact, they only represent the most powerful, part of the state.

Finally, **THE RIGHT OF HAVING AND OF EMPLOYING A REVENUE**—which adds to this mighty power

power the power of riches: a power, which always diffuses corruption in a republic, and which is never so formidable, as when exercised under the name of bounty; because it may, in times of tumult and dissension, enlist against the state indigence, misery, hatred, and vice,

SUCH being the nature of this association, can it be doubted whether it violates the spirit of our laws? Whether it subverts the principles of that equality, of which we are so jealous? Whether it establishes, and eternally fixes in the state, an order of citizens distinct from their fellow-citizens? No; it cannot be doubted: if this institution subsist, the greater part of this free and high-spirited nation, which, in the acts of its constitution, takes the name of SOVEREIGN, and which is entitled to that name by the rights of nature and of conquest, is destined to see itself hereafter branded with the epithet of PEOPLE, which the titled slaves of Europe have converted into a term of reproach; and to have established, as rulers over their own heads, and over those of their posterity, an eternal race of aristocratical tyrants, who will soon, perhaps,

perhaps, assume all those insulting titles, with which the nobility of Europe crush the private citizens, their equals, and their brethren. Every state (it is but too true) bears in itself the seeds of decay, and of dissolution. This is an evil inevitably incident to human affairs. But, at least, that poison, which is engendered with states, unfolds itself but slowly, and in the course of ages. The spectacle before us is unparalleled in the annals of mankind. For the first time is seen, among an enlightened people, guided by sagacious and far-sighted politicians, a constitution maturely formed, unanimously adopted, and solemnly proclaimed: and near it, at the very moment of its formation, an institution totally repugnant to its genius, and to the general spirit of its laws. Thus do the Americans with one hand erect their constitution, and with the other the very principle of its dissolution.

Does not then, alas! that principle already too much ferment in the bosom of our country? The luxury of nature, too lavish in our behalf, is the first and the eternal shoal against which we have to guard. It has prepared an inequality of fortunes, destructive of that equality of rights, which we have established; and the
manners

manners and prejudices, which we have imbibed under the English dominion, do, by the very defect of our laws, but too strongly invite an aristocracy (T), without our being forward to institute, arm, and endow it. The infernal seeds of divisions, of jealousies, of envy, of avarice, of public and of private factions, of avowed and of lurking discontents, all the vices, in short, of Europe, fomented by implacable enemies, who thought it not enough to attack us with the sword, have been long since scattered over our country. If instead of checking their growth, we multiply and foster them, we are undone, and shall not even deserve compassion.

If we would be still further convinced that the order of *Cincinnatus* does in truth establish a NOBILITY in the heart of America, we need only examine the avowed motives of the institution: and, if these be all delusive or dangerous; if the *Cincinnati*, to gloss over their union, pronounce founding words vacant of sense, nothing of their league will remain but the positive clauses, forming a confederacy of powerful men, and constituting the proud distinction, which they arrogate.

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The *Cincinnati* then pretend to have associated, "to perpetuate the remembrance of the revolution."

A medal suspended by a ribband! such then is the venerable monument of the greatest of revolutions! the existence of our country, our new-founded empire, the change wrought in the aspect of all America by our virtues and our laws, every region which has been witness to our exploits, fields of battle, rivers, seas dyed with the blood of the enemy, these are not monuments sufficiently noble, to attest this great event! Woe be to us, if ever the memory of this revolution be lost by posterity! it never can be lost, till we have lost our glory, dishonoured our virtues, and degraded our souls. It never can be lost, till we have destroyed the work of our ancestors. And can we believe that, when that time arrives, a paltry ribband, a frivolous distinction, will revive in our minds those remembrances, which we ourselves shall have extinguished by our baseness, our servility, and our vices? Let us preserve that equality, for which we fought, and posterity will never forget the revolution, to which we owe it. You, you alone will destroy that equality, if your order be not dissolved.

But

But “ *the states cannot pay the army; the officers will be contented with this bauble, and they will not abuse it. It is only a tub thrown out to the whale.* ”

Either the state is capable of repaying your services, and in that case it certainly will not be so ungrateful, nor so unjust, as to withhold from you your due (this humiliating misfortune will not happen; but should it, still, it were a dishonour for you, noble republicans, to have foreseen it, and it becomes you to have the magnanimity to forgive the injustice of your country): or the republic is incapable of discharging the debt to her brave defenders in money; must she then pay them by overturning, with her own hand, the constitution which they have purchased with their blood? Must she pay them with the slavery of posterity? Of that posterity, whose fathers too bled for their country? The *Cincinnati* call themselves the brethren of the officers: to be entitled then to the fraternity of arms, rank is necessary. In what relation will they stand to the rest of their countrymen? To those who fought like them, and fought as valiantly, though in a lower rank? Soon will the lowest subaltern, decked with his
 ribband,

ribband, blush to be compared, or to be allied with the first serjeant, or with the bravest soldier, in the army. And yet the difference between these ranks is inconsiderable in a republic, where arms have been taken for the sole purpose of maintaining the rights of nature. The superiority of merit certainly belongs to the serjeant, whom a little money would have raised to the rank of an officer. Yet these serjeants and these soldiers have no medals and no ribbands, but wait patiently for their pay, which is their subsistence and their life. And shall the officers be more rapacious, or less generous, than they? Men, who can subscribe to a fund, and consecrate a part of their pay to acts of charity, are certainly rich enough to bestow it upon their country, which is involved in debt, and overburthened with engagements, at a time, when it ought, by the greatest exertions, to deserve the confidence of its citizens, and of foreign nations. Would this then, illustrious warriors, be your first sacrifice to your country? And would it be without reward? It is not among you, as in Europe, where some degree of courage is necessary to honour that merit, which is without title, without honour, without rank, without fortune. Among you it is known

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that,

that, next to a noble action, nothing can equal the tear which starts into the eye of him, who hears it.

“ They will extend acts of beneficence towards those officers and their families, who may unfortunately be under the necessity of receiving it.”

Do they, then, stand in need of insignia, of privileges, of a PEERAGE, of an hereditary nobility, to exercise beneficence? Must a man henceforth in America, as well as in Europe, be able to boast of high ancestry, before he has a right to portion the indigent? And will he be allowed to portion none but those who can themselves vaunt their lineage (U)? Every citizen, as an individual, may, and, as a man, ought to exercise charity. But what right has any body of men in the state to profess itself the distributor of bounty? A potent association, distinguished by its pre-eminence, and which has the power of lavishing gold, and purchasing the gratitude of the unfortunate, is an association more than alarming to the liberty of a republic. This right of relieving want, and of rewarding services, is a right, which, in a republic, belongs to the state. If it suffer any body of men to invade its prerogative of beneficence, it alienates one
of

of the noblest domains of sovereignty, the general sentiment of gratitude, which citizens owe to their country: it estranges the hearts of its children, and devotes them to powerful individuals: it commits a crime in the eyes of liberty. Most of the tyrants in the republics of antiquity laid the foundation of their country's servitude by their bounty. They took the poor into their pay, that they might enslave the rich; and they prepared the misery of their country, by relieving the misery of individuals. The same Manlius, who drove the Gauls from the capitol, and saved Rome, was accused, when elated perhaps with his victory, of an attempt to reign over the country, for which he had conquered; and the treasures, which he had lavished, were what marked him for a tyrant. I much fear that, more accustomed to contemplate monarchies than republics, we are unwarily inclined to combine institutions, that clash and destroy each other. Under kings, it is doubtless a happiness that particular societies associate, to mitigate the evils which proceed from the government, and which, with criminal indifference, it neglects to remedy. There it is well, if the virtues of individuals counterbalance the mischiefs of power; if private men

discharge the debt of the state. But let us, who are equal and free ; let us, whose first duty is public virtue, and who neither can nor ought to exist without it ; let us beware of setting such an example, and of suffering the state to be dispossessed of its noblest function, that of preventing distress, or of assuaging it when produced by necessity. If it neglect that office, let us admonish, but let us not despoil it. It would be even a calamity to the unfortunate, to permit such a privilege to be usurped by any association. The state would familiarize itself with the idea, that it was discharged from the noblest of its duties. To abandon the practice of it to a particular set of men, would be to prepare ourselves both chains and vices, to hazard at once our constitution and our morals.

They profess that they will “ *attend incessantly to preserve inviolate the exalted rights of human nature*” and destroy the first of those rights, that of EQUALITY !

Are there then, ye illustrious *Cincinnati*, two kinds of rights belonging to human nature ? Is there in nature a species of men, who are constrained

strained by their condition to betray or abandon their rights? Is there in nature a species of men reduced to the humble condition of PLEBEIANS? and another species more eminent, the individuals of which are incapable of maintaining their rights, without the incessant watching of a dignified order of PATRICIANS? Yet this they must mean, or nothing. To them the people of America seem unfit to be trusted with their own national honour, or their own affairs, unless a distinct order undertake to superintend them. This care is too officious. The contradiction is too glaring. They have instituted an order, they have erected a proud distinction, from the summit of which they look down, with protecting pity, on all beneath them. They have laid in ruins that beautiful, plain, and natural equality, which God created for our use and happiness, which philosophy contemplated with heartfelt pleasure, which our laws and government promised, and ought to have secured to us. . . . They have violated all! and yet, in the very treaty of their usurping league, do they talk of the EXALTED RIGHTS OF HUMAN NATURE! they extol what they violate! they swear to defend the domain of public liberty, and

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they

they are its only invaders ! but the disguise is too thin. No man, who has the use of his reason, will believe that a people's rights, purchased with their blood, will not soon be invaded by men, who disdain the condition of private citizens, and soar to a presumptuous title, which they have invented for themselves. The first of the exalted rights of human nature is *liberty*; the second *equality*, without which liberty cannot be respected; the third is *property*, the lawful fruit of the equal use of liberty. The *Cincinnati*, by destroying the second of these rights, abuse the first, endanger the last, and sever the common bond of all.

"They will promote and cherish, between the respective states, union and national honour."

UNION ! HONOUR ! . . . Dissension rather, and disgrace ! How ! UNION by the establishment of an aristocracy, the necessary consequence of which is to divide the citizens, and arm them one against another ! NATIONAL HONOUR by an institution, which must degrade the nation itself, by despoiling it of the right of equality, the first source of greatness, and the dearest pledge of liberty ! Let us leave it to Baron Steuben to boast of the good effects of an order
of

of knighthood in the petty principalities of Germany, where every generation sees invented in every village some new symbol of dignified slavery, and where the scale of honour is regulated by the antiquity of titles and liveries. As for us, who know no honour but liberty, no master but the law, far from seeing a bond of political union in this national order, we ought to discover in it a never-failing source of dissension; since such an institution must establish amongst us two distinct bodies, one composed of the army, and the other of the people. Let us not open a vast and reproachful theatre for oppressive distinctions, heart-burning jealousies, and civil feuds, which always terminate in the deep and ignominious silence of slavery (V).

As for that *national honour*, of which the *Cincinnati* claim to be the guardians; woe to us if it cannot reside out of a body of men, and cannot be kept alive but by a particular order! Still monarchical ideas in the minds of republicans! This mixture and confusion of ideas does, I own, greatly alarm me. Nor is it true, even in a monarchy, that national honour resides in a body of nobility. The nobles of Germany are superior in number and in

lineage to those of France and of England; and that England and France have reaped more glory than Germany, is to be ascribed to their having produced superior talents, which are the birth-right and the nobility of plebeians.

But, after all this, honour, which is the growth of Europe, this substitute for virtue, may under kings, perhaps, be properly entrusted to a particular body: because it can hardly exist in the mass of the nation. It requires prejudices; it is nourished by distinctions; it is a vanity disguised under pride, which may give some energy to minds that are dejected by a general servitude. But amongst us, where every citizen is the equal of his fellow-citizen, there can be no honour but virtue, but the love of our rights, the detestation and contempt of inequality, the constant readiness to bleed for our country, and for liberty: and unless we would already become a base and corrupted nation, we ought all to prove ourselves inspired with these noble sentiments. Whoever pretends to possess them exclusively, or in a superior degree to us, injures and insults us. It is with our laws, with our constitution, with
the

the magistrates whom we elect and who govern us, that we ought to repose this sacred flame. Placed elsewhere, it would only resemble those funeral lamps, which shed a glimmering light upon the tomb where they are fixed, but which cannot impart life to the ashes it preserves.

"An order of nobility will give strength, duration, and reverence to our government."

What ! has not then the American war convinced the world that an order of nobility is not necessary to our constitution ? May it not make one doubt whether a nobility is advantageous to any other ? Is further experience wanting ? When we dared to make a stand against our oppressors, we had no distinctions amongst us. Our people was composed chiefly of those men, whom enslaved nations call PEASANTS (W) ; and these husbandmen, who had no orders, no titles, no medals, no ribbands, made such good officers, such brave soldiers, such consummate statesmen, that the adulation and presumption of European courtiers would hardly dare to find their equals, or their rivals, amidst the mob of titled and decorated slaves, which crowd the steps of the thrones of kings.

Yet

Yet what was their language at the commencement of the war? How did they in their speeches treat these men, who were shortly to become heroes? *These vile peasants, these base mechanics, were to fly before a regiment of European scapoys.* They blushed to fight with them; they scorned to name, or even to take notice of them. They were taught, however, how independent real courage is of those military trammels called discipline; they were taught what resistance these republican peasants and artisans could make, against the fleets, the armies, the treasures, and the intrigues of kings. This they were taught! *they* returned to kiss their chains, and *we* are free.

That martial virtue of our fellow-citizens, that consciousness of dignity, that contempt of dangers and of tyrants, those generous efforts, which they have so often made, and which have been crowned with liberty and glory; what were they but the natural effect of equality? Of the proud and nervous energy of men, who fought for themselves, and not for masters; who employed, and were not employed by, their respected leaders; and whose souls and characters were not shrouded, or confined by
any

any artificial superiority? It was that high-minded pride, which dictates to man, that none of his own species is his superior: it was that pride, which raised us fleets and armies, which created us resources, which enabled us, without pay and without murmurs, to fight, campaign after campaign, against one of the most formidable powers of the earth. Such a noble sacrifice to patriotism, history cannot parallel! and such never will be found in any nation where a nobility has usurped exclusive authority! If the institution, which is to establish nobles in our country, be not totally extirpated, those great and generous virtues, which effected the revolution, will be extinguished never to revive. Pride and insulting scorn, which the patrician Sallust calls the *common disease of nobility* (X), will so debase the souls of our posterity, that it will not be long before they will be boldly pressed with an idea, that American independence was thus limited in its origin, that the effusion of so much blood, the sacrifice of so many illustrious victims, such a variety of glorious actions, honourable sufferings, and marvellous achievements, were not the work of the people, nor were effected for their good, but that they are the particular glory of a few families,

lies, for whom they have justly founded grandeur, exclusive privileges, and, as it were, a monopoly of power, throughout the continent. For, after a violation of the rights of nature, tyranny has nothing more to do, than to seek in a pretended positive law, or in the code of superstition, for an historical title to sanctify its pretensions, and legalize its crimes.

There exists a people on whom wisdom seems to have conferred a right of immortality among nations. With them, the privilege of ennobling a man's progenitors (Y) is the reward of sublime virtues, and of distinguished services rendered to the state, and to mankind. A great man there is so much superior to distinctions invented and prostituted by human vanity, that none dare to confer them upon him. The only persons ennobled are those to whom the nation owes the blessing of his existence.

The *Cincinnati* claim a different requital; and would dignify their children at the expence of their country!

The custom of ennobling ancestors is as wise as it is noble. Honour, which ascends, is at least not repugnant to reason, like honour which descends.

descends. It plausibly presumes, that the instruction and example of their forefathers has prepared excellent citizens for the state, and that the virtues of the descendants have been a domestic inheritance (Z).

But what can be said for the custom of ennobling posterity? a custom, which extends the pride of a reward to those who have done nothing to deserve it? which even contributes to render them unworthy of their nobility, by sowing vices where it confers honours (AA)? and which too often bestows on the most abject of men rewards for the services and the blood of the most honourable? just as superstition has transferred to images of stone and brass that worship, which gratitude first instituted for the divinity.

Retrospective honour is, besides, beneficial to the state: it encourages parents to give a virtuous education to their offspring, and thus actually makes true nobility, the nobility of the soul, hereditary. But honour descendible, as it may light on a posterity, which cannot pretend to any share of those past virtues, of which it is, however, the reward, is worse than absurd; it is
ridiculous;

ridiculous ; because it gathers strength in opinion, in proportion as it loses it in reality, by departing farther from its source (BB). Nay, it is prejudicial to that very posterity, because they find it more convenient to enjoy a conventional, than to deserve a personal dignity ; because it renders them haughty and indolent ; because it leaves them no prospect of advancement, but in the trade of a foldier, which requires neither abilities nor industry ; because it founds upon hereditary pride an inequality of fortune, which is as prejudicial to particular families, as it is to the state. Such is the perennial source of vanity and beggary, of meanness and pride, of slavery and tyranny, which pours over countries infected with this lineal nobility, all kinds of public and private evils.

These will in our country be the work of the *Cincinnati*. NOBILITY, says Machiavel, IS A SPECIES OF VERMINE WHICH INSENSIBLY CONSUMES LIBERTY. This order, which America beholds with indifference, will, when consolidated by time, convert the children of our military chiefs into a distinct, a privileged, and a commanding race. For man sees a God in every object of veneration or terror (CC). Lying poets and fawning orators will prostitute their eloquence to confer

fer the honours of an apotheosis on the parricides, who will have enslaved their country (DD). The rest of the citizens will be nothing but an obscure, spiritless, degraded and degenerate rabble, unworthy of regard, and devoted to oppression, as if every plebeian were, according to the strong expression of Livy, *hateful even to the immortal Gods* (EE). Yet a little while, and the *Cincinnati* will persuade themselves, that they are lineally descended from heaven, that they are by right divine the YNCAS of our America; they will deem it an abomination, and little less than sacrilege, to unite in marriage with any of the devoted race, and their imperial cast will doom all their brethren to slavery.

Such is the eternal lesson, which the history of man and of nations affords us in every page. The nature of things cannot alter. Corruption always arises from inequality. Diffensions are inflamed by corruption. Parties are formed. Civil wars break out. New Syllas place themselves at the head of the nobles; new Mariuses become the leaders of the people. Victory or defeat, exiles, confiscations, proscriptions, every species of cruelty, and every degree of oppression, are the inevitable consequences of a clash
of

of parties. A dictator appears, and erects his own arbitrary power upon the ruins of his country. Thus (that I may gratify the timid caution of modern times, and cite only ancient examples), thus no sooner had Cæsar, the false champion of the people, triumphed over Pompey, the short-sighted chief of the patricians, than he was seen to trample upon public liberty. Thus did so many battles, so many victories, and so many toils, that they still confound our astonished imagination, serve only to glut the ambition of an order of *Cincinnati*, not decorated with badges less numerous, less dazzling, and far less formidable than ours, and to establish, over a nation of heroes, the most atrocious tyrants, and the cruelest despotism, that ever exulted in the sufferings of human nature.

Such are the advantages, which result to society from the institution of an hereditary, or, if you will, a perpetual nobility, and from that unnatural *disorder* which is dignified with the name of ORDER (FF). It has every where been a volcano of dissensions, troubles, and tyranny; and such it will every where be, but above all in a republic. For the mischief of a nobility can be counteracted only by the mischief of a king,

king, who may protect the people from their nobles, and in this light, perhaps, alone can one find any excuse for an honest man, who, not having in view the oppression of the people, concurs nevertheless in the institution of a nobility. Far from being the supporters of the state, or, as Judge Blackstone has been pleased to call them, "*pillars reared from among the people to support the throne* (19)," the nobles of commonwealths have ever been, and still are, nothing but tyrants; and the nobles of monarchies have ever been, and still are, nothing but the trusty instruments of oppression (GG), as imperious masters, as they are groveling slaves; men ready at all times to insult, harass, and grind the people, already ruined, exhausted, and withered by this nobility, like the stunted underwood, which is overshadowed and starved by the towering oaks.

The *Cincinnati* will, no doubt, treat as DECLARATION the expression of our too just alarms. Some of them already assume the cloak of political modesty, and pretend to be astonished, that they should be thought "*more dangerous than a city corporation of tradesmen and mechanics,*"

F

" nics,

“ nics, or than free-masons and other clubs, who wear badges or medals.” How strange a passion is pride, which can assume all shapes and colours, and humble itself to the very dust, to accomplish its purpose! It is a serpent that coils itself up to dart out more impetuously! . . . This moment the *Cincinnati* take upon them the dispensation of bounty, the superintendence of the public weal, and of the honour, union, and happiness of nations, and the preservation of the most exalted rights of nature; and, the next, they prostrate themselves to the level of men, with whom, upon any other occasion, they would deem all comparison an insult! Vain doubles of ambition! which, to the eyes of watchful liberty, can never palliate a league, the more detestable because the men, whose vanity conspires against their country, boast of honourable intentions, pretend to impose on themselves sacred duties, and artfully disguise their dangerous existence. Even for the name which they have assumed, they owe a strict account.

Their veneration for Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus, celebrated like them for the defence of his country, and their fixed resolution to follow his example by returning to their citizenship, has suggested

gested to them the idea of giving his name to their society.

Thus is the republican, who, in his heroic simplicity, brought back his victorious sword, and his triumphant laurels, to the plough, from which the public confidence had torn him, invoked by these turbulent and ambitious spirits, who, by their own avowal, *were called, like him*, to the sacred mission of defending their country, and yet could not wait to receive, from her hands, the distinctions, to which they aspired! Were they called, too, to an hereditary reward? They boast of their retreat, as if they had been to choose whether they would lay down their arms! Did they think that their return to the condition of citizens was an act of mercy to their country? Had their country surrendered itself up to them? Ten thousand Cæsars are no mighty sacrifice! Do they, then, at the moment that they are arrogating to themselves an unconstitutional dignity, assume the name, and affect the character, of a Roman, who was, of all the children of the republic, the most modest and submissive! For in this point of view alone is his character known and admired. Where then is it written, that *Cincinnatus* invested himself

with an order, and conferred it on his fellow-soldiers? That he kept his fasces after he had returned to his plough? Such a proceeding was far beneath the greatness of his soul: but it was more than he would have dared attempt. For less crimes than this that Republic, in the days of her liberty, and of her true glory, expelled, banished, and put to death, several ambitious citizens, as deserving for their talents and their services, as the most illustrious of our countrymen.

The Romans learned, by sad experience, an important lesson. They knew that military commanders, habituated to the implicit obedience of armies, and intoxicated with their own renown, are commonly in their hearts aristocratical, and implacable enemies to equality. In proportion as they become distinguished, they are tempted, under a plausible show of merit and of justice, to usurp privileges of the most dangerous consequence. The vulgar adore them with a stupid veneration (HH), which men truly magnanimous disdain (II), and which gives the real friends of liberty cause to dread the gratitude of the people, as an earnest of their slavery. This extravagant veneration in-

flames

flames their pride, and despotism rises behind the smoke of the incense, which is burned at their feet. Some common-wealths (JJ) have, for this reason, always appointed a foreigner to command their armies, and nations enlightened by a sagacious foresight have found themselves under the necessity of removing citizens distinguished by military services; they have excluded them from dignities, and constantly struggled against their influence. Their fame, their reputation, their glory, have been thought an ample reward to console them for the strict watch kept over them. It is possible, and indeed probable, that fear, as much as virtue, might restrain some of the great men of antiquity from aught which could give alarm to their fellow-citizens: for there is no reason to suppose them to have been more disinterested than the chiefs of America; and, from their moderation, we may conclude, independent of all historical proofs, that their republics had morals, which no longer prevail with us, or restrictive laws, which we have not yet established.

All these truths are known to the sensible part of the American army. But their ambition cannot be satisfied with the reputation,

which their services have gained them, unless it likewise secure them nobility. It is not enough, then, that the admiration of posterity will raise over their tombs trophies, which neither the revolution of ages, nor the power of fate, can demolish ! Unless titles be engrafted in their families, and medals be suspended at their breasts, which, at any other time, they would have thought childish ornaments, they are not rewarded. Would but the magnanimous defenders of America reflect in the privacy of their own consciences and understandings, they would be convinced that a motive of vanity, rather than pride, has suggested to them a project, which cannot but poison their happiness, and tarnish their glory. They would of themselves dissolve this fatal institution, and rest satisfied with the tribute of veneration and gratitude of their fellow-citizens.

But whatever be the event, the alarm is now sounded. Let the brave awake. The freedom of a country may be overturned by causes imperceptible to the multitude, especially where popular assemblies, transported by passion, strike at persons instead of things. To aggrandise the ambitious is then an easy task ; and, while
ven-

vengeance is wreaked, for minute wrongs, on petty enemies, a snare is laid for liberty, the first object of the toils of men, and the dearest treasure to their posterity.

But the question no longer concerns slight attempts, clandestine designs, and imperceptible causes; the *Cincinnati*, I have demonstrated, create two distinct orders of men in their country :

A race of PATRICIANS, hereditary nobles, the flower of the army, powerful families, citizens of the first rank, chiefs of the state, distinguished by their merit, by the nature and glory of their services, and by the lustre of their reputation; men formidable by their alliances, and whose eternal object will be to command :

THE PEOPLE, or plebeians, destined even by the mediocrity of their fortunes to moderation, from which they never deviate, till irritated by contempt or injustice, and whose only object is not to be oppressed. But oppression they are too inevitably doomed to by this usurping institution, which cannot but perpetuate the grandeur of families in an aristocratical nobi-

lity, and terminate at last in a monarchical tyranny (KK).

America is now to decide with certainty, whether the human species were formed by nature for liberty, or for slavery. For never did any republican government, in any part of the globe, meet with circumstances so favourable to its establishment, as ours has done. A country new, inexhaustible, endowed with all the riches of nature, surrounded with immense seas, easy of defence, and far removed from the disgrace and from the crimes of despotism: an age of science, and of toleration: the rest of the globe impotent, or exhausted; childish, or delirious: recent examples of similar revolutions: the successes or the errors which distinguished them: the body of the nation already formidable: the most favourable principles, and even prejudices: the seeds of good laws: the sketch of a constitution, not fortuitous, but deliberately planned: profound statesmen, valiant chiefs. All these advantages will, in a few years, be stifled by the order of the *Cincinnati*. What a mortal wound, alas, to the liberty of mankind! Must we then own, with the enemies of freedom, that the noble ideas of
 Sidney,

Sidney, Locke, Rouffeau, and others, who have indulged dreams of political happiness, may be the object of a sublime theory, but cannot possibly be reduced into practice? Shall our example serve to invigorate that despotism, which already shackles Europe, by demonstrating that a people, who have once been subject to a king, are too depraved ever after to govern themselves, to support liberty, or even to dispense with distinctions, orders, titles, and all those toys, with which kingly government lures human vanity (LL), and which have so fascinated our understandings and our senses, that talents, virtues, and even riches, are not in our estimation objects so desirable as a medal and a ribband

Ah! let us not so cruelly disappoint the expectations of the world. Let us not stamp such dishonour on the name of Americans; let us not fix such a stain on human nature. Let us not afford such cause of affliction to the wise. " It is
 " impossible that they should not offer up their
 " prayers that the American republic may
 " attain the highest degree of prosperity, of
 " which it is susceptible. It is the hope of
 " human

" human nature. It ought to become its great
 " example. It ought, by its conduct, to prove
 " to the world, that mankind may be free,
 " and at peace, and can do without every spe-
 " cies of shackles, which tyrants and impostors
 " of every garb have sought to impose upon
 " them, under pretence of the public good.
 " It ought to set the example of political
 " liberty, of religious liberty, of liberty of com-
 " merce and of industry. It ought to set the
 " example of every species of liberty. The asy-
 " lum which America opens to the oppressed of
 " all nations, ought to console the earth. The
 " ease with which men may avail themselves of
 " this advantage, by escaping from the effects
 " of a bad government, will force govern-
 " ments to become just, and to see their errors.
 " The rest of mankind will gradually become
 " sensible of the vanity of those illusions, with
 " which politicians have so long lulled them-
 " selves to rest. But this can never happen,
 " if America guard not against those errors,
 " or if it become, the counterpart of Europe, a
 " mass of divided powers contending together
 " for territory, or for the emoluments of com-
 " merce; and constantly cementing the slavery
 " of

“ of the people, by all the little artifices of
“ European politics (MM).”

Let the legislature blast this destructive institution of an artificial, and (which is its masterpiece) a decorated nobility. But before she dart the lightning of her vengeance, before she extirpate the name of the *Cincinnati*, let her admonish her children; let her say (for they have deserved that tender regard from her):

“ The patriotic views, and pious projects,
“ which seduced you, will some time or other
“ be the disguise of a political conspiracy of
“ military commanders, a conspiracy dangerous
“ to the public weal, and therefore criminal. Free men cannot but censure, reprobate, extirpate such an innovation. Be your
“ portion our gratitude, and your own well-
“ earned glory, which may justly excite envy:
“ and which will give you sufficient influence
“ in your country.

“ Remember that hour of consternation when
“ the southern troops, encamped near Jackson-
“ borough, covered the assembly of Carolina,
“ which

“ which was then debating upon the melan-
 “ choly and cruel subject of the confisca-
 “ tions (NN). The whole army, from the
 “ general to the ragged centinel, held that
 “ proscription in horror. They were asto-
 “ nished that the inhabitants of South Caro-
 “ lina could burn with such a feverish thirst of
 “ vengeance. These magnanimous soldiers,
 “ half-naked and half-starved, had braved want,
 “ toil, and danger. Without pay, and almost
 “ without hopes; they had encountered the
 “ severities of every various climate, from the
 “ walls of Quebec, quite to the lines of Sa-
 “ vannah. Most of them had been imprisoned
 “ more than once, by land and sea, and had
 “ endured all the rage of insolent conquerors,
 “ who treated their captives as rebels. Yet
 “ could they not conceive how adversity should
 “ render men cruel. The distempered rage
 “ of our countrymen, precipitating the ruin
 “ of their brethren, filled them with grief and
 “ horror. Their’s was not an unavailing com-
 “ passion. They mixed with the members of
 “ both houses, and by dint of argument, and
 “ plain moderate discussion, opposed these
 “ violent resolutions with such success, that
 “ the

" the number of the proscribed was much di-
 " minished. illustrious, generous men !
 " such, we thank God, was the empire of your
 " virtues ! May the hand of oppression
 " never compel your sons to drink of the
 " bitter cup of adversity ! or, should the will
 " of heaven doom them to suffer, may they
 " find some grateful being to remember, that
 " their fathers were the friends of human na-
 " ture in affliction ! illustrious, gene-
 " rous men ! you have delivered us from the
 " yoke of a proud nation : fully not so su-
 " blime an exploit ! tarnish not your glory !
 " bequeath not to your children the power
 " of being tyrants, and the danger of being
 " punished !

" The honours and exclusive privileges of
 " an hereditary order are a formal usurpation
 " of sovereignty ; for they are an invasion of
 " the constitution. They are beneath you ;
 " for they bespeak a solicitude to commemo-
 " rate what is known to all the world.
 " Warriors of America, ye, whom your ac-
 " tions have ennobled in the eyes of all
 " mankind, beware of degrading yourselves.
 " What

" What higher and truer nobility do you seek,
 " than to share the sovereignty which belongs
 " equally to you and to your brethren? Com-
 " pared with this, what is that artificial nobi-
 " lity which you aspire to? What would it
 " be, even among the noblemen of Europe?
 " Carry among Europeans your paltry deco-
 " ration, and the distinction, which you would
 " fain transmit to your posterity. See how
 " they will be despised. See how high the
 " titled slaves of despots, who carefully pre-
 " serve for ages the monuments of their ser-
 " vitude, will imagine themselves placed above
 " you. See what a superiority they will affect
 " over men, who are only heroes; and then
 " judge of a conventional nobility; since,
 " beaming with virtues and with glory, you
 " are yet, in the eyes of European noblemen,
 " but plebeians.

" You aspired to the name of free men;
 " you have earned it by arms. It is the
 " noblest of titles. Respect it, and make it
 " be respected. The basis of the government
 " which you have founded, is EQUALITY.
 " You will not destroy it; you, who pur-
 " chased

" chased it with your blood. You will not
 " forget, that this generous people never ceased
 " to fight by your sides. The heroes of li-
 " berty, you will not become its foes. The
 " deliverers of the new world, you will not
 " become its scourges. But, if you
 " should dare attempt it, you would soon be
 " taught, that America fought not for the
 " choice of tyrants."

THE END OF THE CONSIDERATIONS.

NOTES

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

REFERRED TO IN THE

CONSIDERATIONS.

(A) The council of Censors, for instance, which, by the forty-seventh article of the constitution of Pennsylvania, is erected for the purpose of enquiring whether the constitution has been preserved inviolate in every part, ought undoubtedly to take into consideration so important an institution as that of the *Cincinnati*. But a council which is to be assembled only once in seven years, is ill calculated to oppose sudden abuses as they spring up in the state, or to repair any detriment done to the constitution: and most probably is altogether useless. But see the postscript.

(B) The order has not so much as attempted to disguise this project; for their first instrument of association declares expressly, that the month's pay advanced by each officer "shall remain *for ever* to the "use of the state society: the interest *only* of which, "if necessary, to be appropriated to the relief of the "unfortunate." So that this so much boasted bounty of the *Cincinnati* amounts to no more than a 240th part of their pay; and the officer whose income is fifty pounds a year, will contribute only four shillings and two pence annually to the society. The instrument goes on to say, "it is probable that some persons

“ sons may make donations to the general society,
 “ for the purpose of establishing funds for the further
 “ comfort of the unfortunate, in which case such
 “ donations must be placed in the hands of the
 “ treasurer-general, the interest only of which to be
 “ disposed of, if necessary, by the general meeting.”
 —See the postscript.

(C) It has been observed in the introduction, note (2), that Washington is now president of the order, baron Steuben having only lent his name to the general.

(D) They have even given a preference to those who have no other merit than that of being related to the deceased officers: “ As a testimony of affection
 “ to the memory and offspring of such officers as
 “ have died in the service, their eldest male branches
 “ shall have the same right of becoming members,
 “ as the children of the actual members of the so-
 “ ciety.”

(E) *Hoc ipsum, ne connubium Patribus cum plebe esset, non Decemviri tulerunt paucis his annis, pessimo exemplo publico, cum summa injuria plebis? An esse ulla major aut insignior contumelia potest, quam partem civitatis, velut contaminatam, indignam connubio haberi? Quid est aliud, quam exsilium intra eadem mœnia, quam relegationem pati? Ne affinitatibus, ne propinquitatibus immisceamur, caverent; id vos sub legis superbissimæ vincula conjicitis, qua dirimatis societatem civi-*
 G lem

lem, duasque ex una civitate faciatis. Cur non sancitis ne vicinus patricio sit plebeius? ne eodem itinere eat? ne idem convivium ineat? ne in foro eodem consistat? Liv. lib. 4. cap. 4.

(F) *Plebs vero dicitur in quâ gentes civium patriciæ non insunt*—is the definition of the word *plebs*, which *Aulus Gellius* (Noct. Att. lib. 10. cap. 20.) cites from *Capito*.

(G) The power of the consuls was unlimited: but the patricians had nothing to fear from an authority, of which they were themselves the judges. The plebeians, therefore, were constrained to endure every kind of oppression. *Valerius Poplicola* made a fruitless attempt to relieve them by the law of appeal to the people, and by that for electing the consuls by centuries. The patricians remained in possession of all honours, and of the disposal of land, and reduced the plebeians to be the mere slaves of their ambition and avarice. The people, at length, broke their shackles; but, as it ever happens, plunged into the other extreme: and when the *comitia tributa*, established by demagogues, sanctified under the name of tribunes, came to share the administration with the *comitia centuriata*, the will of the people prevailed in the one, and that of the patricians in the other. This was a perpetual source of troubles and divisions, which endured as long as the republic, and ceased only when the emperors had engrossed all power, by uniting in themselves the authority of the senate with that of the people. Thus does despotism silence all parties,

parties, by despoiling all. Nothing is then heard but the encomiums which men of wit bestow on the peace of servitude.

(H) According to Dr. Robertson most of their titles, like those of the *Cincinnati*, were created by themselves. "One step more completed their usurpations, and rendered them unalienable. With an ambition no less enterprising, and more preposterous, they appropriated to themselves titles of honours, as well as offices of power or trust." *Hist. Cha. V. vol. I. p. 18.*

(I) The order of the garter owes its creation to the platonic love of Edward III. for the countess of Salisbury. That of the golden fleece flows from a more impure source. The origin of the order of the bath was quite as pitiful. The dream of a superstitious prince of Scotland occasioned the order of St. Andrew. The reputation of the society, or brotherhood, for whom that of the holy ghost was instituted, is notorious. The order of St. Patrick, lately established among the Irish, who seem not to discover in it a link of the chain which binds them, took its rise from a legendary tale of a fanatic preacher. It will not be contended that the caprice, or superstition, of the rich and powerful men, who gave birth to these orders, were a cause as big with important consequences as the favourable opportunity, which the authors of the American revolution have seized on, and the obvious designs which they manifest. No order

of knighthood can bear comparison with theirs, but one, and that with disadvantage, the military order of St. Stephen of Tuscany (1), which was the last blow given to the common-wealth of Florence, and the monument of its destruction.

(K) Like the Roman damsel, in the reign of Romulus, who betrayed her country for rings and bracelets.

(L) It is a singularity worthy of notice in the history of the human heart, or rather in the history of human disgrace, that, among those, whom these truths will most scandalize, are a great many men of the lowest birth. But what affords matter of very melancholy reflection, is the meanness, or the inconsistency of some of those who cultivate letters, and who, far from regarding the exercise of reason and virtue as the only true nobility, strengthen to the utmost of their power the absurd and barbarous prejudices which crushed their fathers, and which emasculate them. I speak not merely of the ridiculous solemnity of the panegyrics which are lavished on some men by poets, orators, and authors of every description, for no better reason, perhaps, than because the object of them was born in a palace instead of a house, or in a house instead of a cottage; but of those declamations upon
unequal

(1) Instituted in 1562 by Cosmo de Medicis, the first great duke of Tuscany, in commemoration of the battle of Marciano, in which the republican party was utterly defeated.

unequal marriages, of which historians, and even moralists, are so prodigal ; and of that immeasurable distance which pretended philosophers place not only between different classes of individuals, but between individuals of the same class. Between nobles for instance, and men ennobled. I met lately in a pretty collection of light poetry, as it is very properly called, with the following lines :

Of a name become great by defending the nation,
Length of time but enhances the fair reputation ;
But, ah ! 'tis not so with a name that grows old,
Meanly deck'd with vain titles, the purchase of gold.
For time won't confound the illustrious and base ;
It will separate both, and range each in his place.
Art of sand and of dirt forms the crystal so bright,
But the diamond alone is the offspring of light.

As for me, I cannot discover either *crystal* or *diamond* in these two orders of men : or, rather, I think that in true moral, as well as in sound natural philosophy, the *diamond* and the *crystal* are alike, the offspring of *sand* and *dirt*. And I have no more veneration, I confess, for the thirty thousand oppressors cased in steel, who, with lances couched, trampled under their horses feet ten or twelve millions of Gauls, than for the multitude of calculating leaches, who suck the impoverished blood of twenty millions of Frenchmen. I observe, indeed, that the former, in order to perpetuate themselves, and to maintain uninterrupted possession of their advantages, have taken

recruits from among the latter. I observe that ferocity and pride have practised the rapine of avarice; and that the junction of power and wealth has united against the people the cruelty of a barbarous conqueror, and the rapacious industry of a speculator. It is not in me, alas! to venerate the result and offspring of this noble mixture. I have now and then some doubt, whether this really constitutes the most respectable part of the inhabitants of the earth, and when I see that it is, at least, the most respected, I sometimes feel compassion for the human kind, and sometimes think they deserve, by their meanness and stupidity, a great part of their misfortunes. That these ideas have a severe and gloomy cast, will be observed by fashionable writers, with all the amiable and easy grace of their native wit. But no matter, though they be severe, provided they be just, reasonable, and honest. For my part, I am firmly persuaded, that if they be rejected, morality rests upon too conventional a basis, and, indeed, I know not what becomes of political morality. These ideas once exploded, it should seem that morals are much less applicable to politics, than mathematics to physic; and yet the wish of all honest men, of all real friends to mankind, must be, that morality were applied to the science of government, as successfully as algebra has been to geometry. This, it will be said, is a chimera; but that I can by no means admit: if it be a chimera, let there be no more talk about morality, let the fact be boldly established to be the right. In a word,

word, let me be enslaved, but let not my ears be fatigued, and my reason insulted.

(M) *Reges serva omnia & subiecta imperio suo esse velint.* Liv. lib. 22.

(N) The Roman emperors were not monarchs. They were chiefs invested with the magistracies of the ancient republic, and with the command of the army : or, in other words, the emperor was a magistrate, superior to all others, and was powerful enough, by the union of his various offices, and, above all, by his military command, to persecute individuals, and to oppress the nation.

(O) See *The constitutions of the several independent states of America*; a work printed in French, and sold at Paris, with royal permission, and which was translated by a duke and peer of France, whose virtue, it must be confessed, might have entitled him, in ancient Rome, to the office of tribune of the people.

(P) It has been observed to me, that the sequel of this passage, in the original Massachusetts constitution, modifies the part which I have cited, and may afford an objection against me. The passage runs thus : “ No man, or corporation, or association of
“ men, have any *other* title to obtain advantages, or
“ particular and exclusive privileges, distinct from
“ those of the community, *than what arises from the*
“ *consideration of services rendered to the public.*”

To this I answer, first, that, for the reasons given in my work, and for many others which might be adduced, the modification is essentially bad; and that error does not establish right. Secondly, That this modification is evidently in contradiction with the sixth article of the act of union, since the confederation has expressly denied itself a right of creating an order of nobility. Thirdly, That at any rate, neither do the laws of any of the states, nor the articles of the confederation, authorise individuals to create titles, and confer them upon themselves, by their own private authority.

(Q) Their laws exhibit a constant application of this doctrine, not only in favour of the people, who have given themselves these laws, but in favour of all men indiscriminately; not even excepting those, whom the universal despotism of nations, consisting nevertheless of their brethren, has hitherto most inhumanly debased and enslaved. “ *No person hereafter imported into this state from Africa, ought to be held in slavery under any pretence whatever; and no negro, Indian, or mulatto slave, ought to be brought into this state for sale from any part of the world.*”—Delaware constitution, art. XXVI. And in the provisional system of government, adopted by congress for the ten new states, called the *Western territory*, which have been established in the country that lies between the lake of the woods, and the confluence of the Ohio and of the Mississippi, we find the following article: “ *After the year 1800 of the Christian era, there shall be no slavery, or involuntary* ”

“ tary servitude, in any of the said states, unless by way
 “ of punishment for some crime, of which the person
 “ accused shall have been duly convicted.”

(R) The writer whose verses I took the liberty, in a former note, to criticise with some degree of severity, because the sentiment which they contain is the more dangerous, as the form in which it is presented is more ingenious and seducing, has, in the same collection, committed a very unjustifiable inaccuracy. It is in a poem entitled, *Portrait historique du charlatanisme*; where the poet personifies imposture, and makes her exclaim:

Yet wild, and rude, just broken from his chains;
 The free American my gifts disdains;
 But still, ere long, I trust that even he
 Shall own my power, and bend the stubborn knee,
 Since the fam'd congress meets with sage intent
Knights to ordain, and orders to invent.

Not only the congress has *never invented orders*, but its uniform conduct bespeaks its fixed disapprobation of them (see, in the postscript, the note respecting the order of divine providence). Granting that a poet might, to suit his own convenience, falsify facts thus grossly, yet surely the notes, which accompany the poem, ought to have corrected the misrepresentation. Those of poets are seldom indifferent: they live by theft; but they live eternally. The advantage of employing forms, peculiar to themselves, and harmonious numbers, which enchant all men, but which
 reject

reject the dulness of detail ever subject to error, and seize only on striking and important consequences, ensures them immortality. One may even doubt, whether the *Spirit of laws* will survive the fine epistles of Horace, or even his amusing odes. It becomes a duty, therefore, to correct every moral error, and every historical misrepresentation, to which poets have given countenance.

(S) As it may be thought in Europe that this calculation is over-rated, I cite the American authority mentioned in the introduction: “ *For the number of the peers of the order, reckoning honorary members, (.) cannot be far short of ten thousand.*”

(T) As this work, which has been written a considerable time, was going to the press, I met with the following passage, in a book ascribed to the *Abbé de Mably*, and printed with his name (2):

“ The law extends the right of voting in the election of representatives to the children of freeholders, who are of age, though they do not pay any taxes. Be it so: but how, let me ask, can this aristocratical distinction blend itself with the purely democratical principles of the Pennsylvanians? Vanity, from which no man is exempt, is the most active and subtle of the passions. These freeholders, I make no doubt, will consider their privileges as a
“ kind

(2) *Observations sur le gouvernement & les Etats-unis d'Amérique*, p. 47, 48, 49. Amsterdam, chez J. F. Rosart.

“ kind of honour, which separates, and ought to se-
 “ parate, them from those citizens, who are not land-
 “ holders. They will soon refuse to mingle with the
 “ objects of their scorn. Hence two classes of fami-
 “ lies will be established; and one of these will con-
 “ clude, that, because it enjoys peculiar privileges,
 “ it ought to form a distinct order. A hereditary
 “ nobility, which the laws of America proscribe, is
 “ thus insensibly formed; and perpetual contests suc-
 “ ceed between the aristocracy, which passions esta-
 “ blish, and the democracy, which the laws protect:
 “ contests, which cannot prove of any advantage to
 “ the common-wealth, nay, which must, at length,
 “ be the cause of its destruction, unless its citizens
 “ be inspired with the virtues which prevailed in the
 “ brightest days of Rome, and cease to consider
 “ riches as the most precious of all possessions.”

This single instance illustrates my idea; and I can-
 not but lament, that similar observations do not
 more frequently occur in the work of so able a writ-
 ter, among whose first counsels to the states of
 America, I should never have expected, I confess,
 to find advice to *restrain*, and not TOO AMPLY
 AND TOO ABSOLUTELY TO ESTABLISH *democracy* (3),
 reli-

(3) “ Permit me, Sir, to ask you, whether your new laws are
 “ adapted to the knowledge, the capacity, and the passions of
 “ the multitude, who are never enough enlightened to distin-
 “ guish licentiousness from liberty? Have they not been taught
 “ to expect more than it is intended, or than it is possible to per-
 “ form? If it be true, that, in consequence of your connection
 “ with

religious toleration (4), and the *liberty of the press* (5).

(U) That a woman of noble birth, who, after having lingered out her childhood in indigence, has,
at

“ with England, the seeds of aristocracy are sown in your nation, and will continually seek to expand themselves, would it not be somewhat imprudent to attempt the establishment of too absolute a democracy? Is it not to set the laws in opposition to the manners of the country? I should have thought that, instead of magnificently kindling the ambition and the hopes of the people, it had been wiser to have proposed to them merely to shake off the yoke of England, in order to obey none but magistrates, whom the mediocrity of their fortunes should render modest, and zealous for the public welfare. In establishing the rights of the people in such a manner, as to secure them from all injustice, the principal object in view should have been to restrain the aristocracy, and to make laws to prevent the rich from abusing their wealth, and purchasing an authority, which they ought not to possess.”

(4) “ You no longer obey the English, nor are under their protection: you are now obliged to govern yourselves. And, perhaps, when you allowed the same rights to all kinds of different sects, which are habituated and familiarized with one another, it might have been necessary to have, in some degree, restrained your excessive toleration, in order to prevent the abuses which may result from it.”

(5) “ I will add that it is very dangerous to establish by law a perfect liberty of the press in a new state, which has acquired its freedom and independence before it has the knowledge or the skill to make a proper use of them. It is true, that without the liberty of the press there can be no freedom of thought, and consequently we cannot at all improve in mora-

lity

at length, attained the summit of grandeur, should seek to rescue some young women, born in that high rank on which she prides herself, from poverty ; that she should lavish the treasures of a great monarch upon this ill-conceived act of benevolence, is but the effect of a reflection upon her own fate, which confines her compassion to that species of adversity, which she imagines most nearly to concern herself. It is the rich blind man who gives alms to the blind beggar in preference to others.

But

“ lity or in learning. Give full indulgence then to the learned,
 “ who study the secrets of nature, who seek truth amid the
 “ ruins of antiquity and the darkness of modern times, and
 “ who write upon laws, upon the regulations, resolutions, and
 “ particular arrangements of politics, and of administrations.
 “ Their errors are not of importance: their discussions, what-
 “ ever they may be, quicken our understanding, and accustom
 “ them to a regular method, and throw useful lights upon mo-
 “ rality and politics.

“ But how is it possible to hope that the Americans, who are
 “ too much habituated to the philosophical ideas, the opinions,
 “ and the prejudices of England, to cast them off on a sudden,
 “ will not continue to draw dangerous consequences from errors,
 “ which they consider as established principles? Were
 “ they to have full liberty of printing what they pleased, before
 “ your common-wealths have established among them a council
 “ or senate, to serve as their palladium, and to preserve and
 “ perpetuate one and the same spirit, what a fluctuation of doc-
 “ trines, what singularities, what disorders, have you not reason
 “ to expect, where every citizen, who has the least talent for wri-
 “ ting, may, with impunity, engage the attention of the public to
 “ his reveries, and attack the fundamental principles of society?”

But that a man obscurely born, who has acquired immense possessions, should proudly erect a public edifice, into which none but children of illustrious families can gain admittance; what is it but the frenzy of a groveling and stupid vanity? Does it not suggest to the spectators, who contemplate that edifice, such an expostulation as this: "Wretch that you are, did it become you to form such an institution; you, who are of the meanest extraction, to speak the language of that pride to which you dedicate this monument? Had it existed before you were born, had the same terms of admission been then prescribed which you have imposed, could it have been an asylum to your obscure and indigent childhood? Your pride thought to disguise the distress of your birth. I will not say its baseness; though you deserve the reproach; for you have discovered the baseness of your heart, and the littleness of your soul. You are even the dupe of your own vanity. You record what you sought to conceal. Throw open this asylum to every child of distress, however born; then will men believe that you were *noble*, and even that *man of quality* which you pretended to be, or they will feel indignant that you were not so (6)."

(V) The

(6) In the above note, the author alludes to the convent of St. Cyr, for the reception of distressed young women of quality, founded by Madame de Maintenon, who was first mistress, and
after

(V) The party which has been long oppressed becomes, in its turn, the oppressor. *Adeo moderatio tuendæ libertatis, dum æquare velle simulando ita se quisque extollit, ut deprimat alium in difficili est. Cavendoque ne metuant homines, metuendos ultrò se efficiunt, et injuriam à nobis repulsam, tanquam aut facere aut pati necesse sit, injungimus aliis.* Liv. lib. iii. cap. 65.

(W) In an account of the life of the count of Panin, which has been translated out of the Russian language into French, we find the following passage :
 “ His father’s soul was as noble as his birth ; fourteen
 “ thousand peasants were all he was worth ; yet moderate
 “ as this fortune was, and notwithstanding the then
 “ situation of his country, he neglected nothing in
 “ the education of his children.” Such are the sentiments, the moderation, the poverty, and the virtues of hereditary patricians.

(X) *Contemptor animus, & superbia, commune nobilitatis malum.* Bell. Jug. 64.

(Y) Whenever

afterwards married, to Lewis XIV, and to the Ecole Militaire, instituted by M. Paris Duverney, a former general of very obscure birth, for the education of such of the young nobility as are without fortunes. The note is followed in the original by a long vindication of M. Duverney, transmitted to the author, as he informs us, by a gentleman of unquestionable veracity, and which tends to prove that M. Duverney’s foundation was originally formed on a more liberal and rational plan, but that it was narrowed and perverted by the absurd policy of the French government. NOTE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

(Y) Whenever a Chinese is preferred to the rank of mandarin, his father and mother are immediately entitled to the same honours as himself; and if his merit is very signal, titles of honour are given to his ancestors, ascending sometimes to the tenth generation.

(Z) *Virtus generis* is the expression of Plutarch; an expression much more philosophical than that of Aristotle, who, according to Charron, defines nobility to be *antiquity of lineage and of riches*. One would have thought that Aristotle had written in the same country, in which father Menestrier published a treatise on *true nobility*, and another on emblems, which he calls **THE PHILOSOPHY OF IMAGES**.

(AA) This custom destroys those sentiments of decorum, which, next to the laws, or indeed better than the laws, govern society, by substituting in the room of that regard which is due to superiority of age, the respect of an old man for a youth his superior in rank. This custom corrupts even the sentiments of nature, by mingling the expression of filial veneration with the homage due to rank. At Rosny, in the pompous mansion of the French Aristides, of the wealthy Cato of modern monarchies, are still shewn two stone benches, where that illustrious knight of such ancient race enjoyed domestic comfort with his family, himself seated, and all the rest of the family standing uncovered, near a bench facing him. I am wrong, perhaps: but I prefer the stick bestrode by Agesilaus playing with his children. Between the
great

great men of antiquity, and the most celebrated characters of modern times, there is much the same difference, as between the talents of Tacitus and of father Daniel. How happens this? Many causes might be assigned; and the *minutiae* of ceremonial which debase history, and cramp men's understandings, is by no means the least.

(BB) This is not only a philosophical truth: it is even matter of mathematical calculation, the most simple and easy to be demonstrated. As thus: it will be admitted, that a man is but of the half blood of the family of his father; the other half belonging to the maternal side; and when the son marries in another family, the father's blood descends to the grandson only in the proportion of

-	-	-	$\frac{1}{4}$
to the great grandson of	-	-	$\frac{1}{8}$
to the next generation of	-	-	$\frac{1}{16}$
and to the next of	-	-	$\frac{1}{32}$

and so on progressively, till, at the ninth generation, which will live about three hundred years hence, the blood of a present knight of the order of *Cincinnatus* will compose only one 512th part of the blood of the man, who will be decorated with the order; which, admitting the conjugal fidelity of American wives, during nine generations, to be unimpeachable, deserves so little regard, that there is not one rational man, who, for the chance of such a trivial advantage, would risk incurring the jealousy, envy, and ill-will of his countrymen.

H

Let

Let us now, after this very simple calculation, trace the genealogy of this young nobleman, of this 512th part of a knight of the present day, in the ascending lines, through the nine generations, from which he will derive his existence, up to the period when the order was instituted.

He will have a father and a mother	-	2	} 1022
each of whom will have had a father and a mother, that is 4 individuals	-	4	
who having each of them had a father and a mother, give at the third generation	-	8	
at the preceding	-	16	
at the next	-	32	
at the next	-	64	
then	-	128	
then	-	256	
and finally, at the ninth generation upwards	-	512	

All of whom must exist at the present moment, to contribute each his proportion to the future knight of *Cincinnatus*.

TOTAL ONE THOUSAND AND TWENTY-TWO ANCESTORS OF THE AFORESAID KNIGHT.

So that to produce hereafter a thousand of these knights, there must exist in the present, and in the intermediate generations, one million and twenty-two thousand fathers and mothers, who contribute to the production.

Now

Now consider, I entreat you, whether, when a just estimate is made of the madmen, profligates, rogues, royalists, and prostitutes, who must necessarily be found among this million of predecessors, posterity will have much reason to boast of the noble blood of the then existing *Cincinnati*. Even the genealogist of these knights, while he proves their title to the honour traced through so many generations, must at the same time prove, how small a part of it they have a right to claim, since the preceding geometrical progression demonstrates, that the right to the honour of the ancestor diminishes in proportion to the antiquity of the family.

I can discover but one answer to this. The present *Cincinnatus* must say ingenuously, "Your calculation is correct: but you have forgotten to take into the account one principal ingredient, MY VANITY; which is incomputable and immeasurable: which already dwells and enjoys itself in the person of the future beloved *Cincinnatus*, the fraction of my ninth descendant, whose existence will recall me to memory, and whose name will give new life to mine. This is the noble interest, the sublime idea, to which I sacrifice my present safety, and the future happiness of generations to come."

(CC) *Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, & hæc ad æternam gloriam via hic est vetustissimus referendi bene merentibus gratiam mos, ut tales numinibus adscribant.*

*Quippe & omnium aliorum nomina Deorum & quæ supra
retuli siderum, ex hominum nata sunt meritis. Plin.
Lib. ii. cap. 7.*

(DD) It was not Poets, but the Roman Senate, which in the lifetime of Cæsar had an inscription engraved under his statue in the Capitol, giving him the name of DEMI-GOD (Dio. lib. 43), and it was in answer to Senators, who came to give Cæsar an account of their deliberations how to find new honours for him, that he said, *You ought rather to think about resuming some of those, which you have already decreed me.* Plutarch. in vita Cæs.

(EE) *Invisi Diis immortalibus. Liv.*

(FF) It is disorder sanctified by public authority. It is a *still Chaos.*

(GG) The English nobility ought perhaps to be excepted from this censure. But the reason is, because they differ essentially from every other European nobility, and particularly from that of France.

1st. The nobility of England form an essential part of the English constitution, whereas with the French constitution, (if that be not indeed an imaginary being,) nothing is less connected than the French nobility; which, as I have observed elsewhere, does not even constitute a body, while the very mechanics in France are formed into corporations.

2dly. The English nobility have peculiar privileges belonging to them as a body, as a judicial body, which

is

is recruited from among chancellors and distinguished lawyers, and men of merit in every profession; and not like in France, where the nobility are created exclusively from among the armed satellites of the prince, or from among secretaries, clerks, and the farmers of the revenue. The exertion of these privileges of the English nobility has more than once saved the constitution. The nobles of France have no privileges but as individuals, and the privileges of noble individuals are always oppressive of the individuals who are not noble.

3dly. In England the quality of noble belongs to none but to the peers of the realm; that is, to none but *dukes, marquisses, earls, viscounts, and barons*. But in France, birth confers it on persons who have neither titles nor estates: it may be bought for money by the meanest individuals, of the meanest ranks in society. It is usually nothing more than a speculation of finance, which may multiply noblemen without end, and which has already multiplied them to the most pitiful degree of derision.

4thly. Nobility in England is transmissible only to the eldest sons of peers, or to the next heir where the title is descendible in the collateral branches. The youngest sons of dukes indeed bear the title of *lord*; but this is only by courtesy, in the same manner as the daughters of earls take the title of *lady*. They do not transmit it to their children, who have no other distinction than that of having the epithet *honourable* prefixed to their names. They have no legal right to the title, and it ceases at the second generation. The

younger sons of noblemen being thus ranked in the class merely of *gentlemen*, form (if I may be allowed the expression) the bond of union between peers and commoners. It is easy to observe, that at the same time that the member of the house of commons, who may be raised by his prince's favour to the peerage, respects the peers, among whose number he hopes one day to be (without forgetting however that he may possibly never be a peer, and consequently that it would be imprudent to infringe upon the rights of commoners, whose equal he is without the slightest distinction in point of right) the peer too reflects that only one of his children will share the privileges of peerage, and that all the rest will be only *gentlemen*.

(HH) M. Æmilius Scaurus being violently suspected of having kindled the social war in Italy, through gratitude for the gold, which he had received from Mithridates, as he had formerly for a similar consideration saved Jugurtha, was accused before the people, together with Cotta and Mummius. Cotta retired into voluntary banishment. Mummius was exiled to Delos. Scaurus, at the age of seventy-two, appeared in the forum, leaning upon some young patricians, and addressed the people in these words; "Are you, Romans, to be the judges of my actions? Your fathers were the witnesses of them. Yet I will abide by your judgment. *One Varius of Sucrona accuses Marcus Æmilius of having betrayed the republic to a king of Pontus. Marcus Æmilius, chief of the senate, denies it. Which will you believe?*".....

Instantly

Instantly the clamours of the people compelled the accuser to abandon his prosecution. Firmness, without doubt, often holds the place of reason in the judgment of the people; but the origin of the Æmilian family, which was that of Scaurus, was lost in the darkness of antiquity. Scaurus too had received consular and triumphal honours; and the people, that people, who are calumniated with so much perseverance, and with such a universal consent, are ever the dupes of their generosity. Every semblance of magnanimity surprises and transports them. They must be guarded from themselves. I represent to myself *Cincinnati* less virtuous than the American officers. I see them treating all my objections as vain sophisms, and pathetically complaining, that envy endeavours to snatch from them a reward, which they have themselves been forward to disarm of every thing alarming. Or I see them admitting the consequences which I insist on, but exclaiming, that to apprehend any thing of the kind from them were monstrous: that to tear their ribband from them were to fix an eternal stigma on the deliverers of their country: and this merely for an error of their patriotism, which they have themselves amply repaired. In a moment perhaps these vain pretexts would operate like Cæsar's garment.

(II) Scipio Africanus refused to let his statue be enshrined among those of the gods. *Voluerunt imaginem ejus triumphali ornatu indutam capitolinis pulvinaribus applicare.* Val. Max. L. iv. c. i. f. 6.

(JJ) Venice. Its general at this moment is Mr. Paterfon, a Scotchman.

(KK) The Roman people had the power of electing in *comitiis calatis* all persons who were to have any authority over them, either in the army, in the government, or in matters of religion (*Si hoc fieri non potest, ut in hac civitate quisquam nullis comitiis imperium aut potestatem assequi possit. Cic. de leg. agr. ii.*). Servius Tullius, who was first seated on the throne without the consent of the people, changed the form of the government, in order that he might transfer all authority to the rich and the patricians, to whom he owed his own elevation (*Tum demum palam facto, & comploratione in regia ortâ, Servius præsidio firmo munitus, primus injussu populi, voluntate patrum regnavit. Liv. lib. I. cap. 41.*). Dionysius of Halicarnassus, lib. 4. seems to contradict this opinion, but the two writers are easily reconciled by an attention to the different times they speak of. See M. Boindin upon the Roman tribes.

(LL) A person of the name of Jenkins, about the latter end of the year 1762, or the beginning of 1763, laid the following project before my Lord Bute, to prevent not only the independence, but even the emancipation of the American colonies, and to retain them for ever in their obedience.

First, He proposed, as the most essential point, the keeping on foot most of the troops which were then in America, and which were disbanded, or recalled at the

the peace. The forts, which are scattered along the frontier of the Indians, and which have been demolished or abandoned, were to be preserved. New ones were to be erected on the coast, *against the invasions of the French*. The lands granted to the veterans were always to be within the precincts of a fort, which, on the frontiers especially, must have quickly formed very respectable military townships.

The creation of a certain number of bishops of the church of England formed the second article of his project. They were to be established first at Philadelphia, Maryland, New-York, and the two Carolinas. Jenkins was very little apprehensive of any opposition that might be made by these colonies; and as to the remonstrances of the four anti-episcopal provinces, which compose New England, they would have been too feeble in themselves, or the general popularity and influence of Great Britain, at the moment of the peace, would have been too great, to prevent the establishments from taking place in the other provinces. Jenkins did not concern himself about their murmurs: he went on quietly with his project, and flattered himself that he should be able, before many years had elapsed, to establish some bishops *in partibus* in New England itself. The bishops were at first to receive each of them a very ample revenue from the government; but soon afterwards they were to have grants of lands in the different provinces proportioned to their rank. The author of this project was well persuaded that, before the end of

ten

ten years, every bishop would have had a cathedral, and a chapter composed of deans and canons, as in England. These dignitaries were easily provided for by similar grants. It must not be forgotten, that to this establishment he added a royal university.

Thirdly, He created an unlimited number of baronets and hereditary noblemen (whose wives would of course take the title of *lady*), selected from among the richest and most powerful citizens. The councils of the respective governors, which formed a kind of house of peers, was to be composed of none but these hereditary noblemen, but with different modifications in each colony, and always with such exceptions, as the government in its wisdom should think fit to reserve to itself.

Observe that it was Jenkins's design to have the whole system established at once: the bishops, the nobility, the army, and the university: all was to appear at the same moment. The enthusiasm for England was then at its highest pitch. The English were every where regarded as the deliverers of America from the devouring ambition of France. They were covered with glory in every quarter of the world. Who could, or who durst, have imputed to them any other motives, than those of a tender and experienced parent, desirous to establish her children after having saved them from shipwreck?

Thomas Jenkins died in 1772. He was once a clerk in the excise-office, then a factor in the Carolinas

linas and Pennsylvania, and afterwards he had some employment in the English army which conquered Canada. He believed sincerely that this project was calculated to secure the peace and happiness of America. It was, at least, neither sanguinary nor absurd.

(MM) This fragment is part of a letter* from Mr. Turgot to Dr. Price, which is printed in the sequel of this volume. It contains the most profound and judicious observations that ever have been made upon the defects of the American constitutions, and the means of removing them. Never was a sublime genius more successfully actuated by the philosophy of a statesman, and of a sincere friend of liberty and of mankind, than in this work: it discovers the heart of Fenelon, united with a much more comprehensive understanding.

* This letter has been lately published, for the first time, in a work of Dr. Price's, entitled, "Observations on the importance of the American revolution, and the means to make it a benefit to the world." This work cannot be too warmly recommended to the Americans. It abounds with judicious observations, sagacious projects, and useful advice; and breathes throughout a spirit of philanthropy, and a love of freedom.

THE END OF THE NOTES.

POST.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE wishes of the patriot, whose useful observations we have here presented to the public (1), have not been disappointed. America has inhabitants, it seems, who do not consider philosophical and political truths as mere abstractions.

Rhode Island, a distinguished nursery of wise and intrepid republicans, has ANNULLED THE PRIVILEGES OF ALL THE SUBJECTS OF ITS STATE WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THIS SOCIETY, AND DECLARED THEM INCAPABLE OF ANY OFFICE UNDER GOVERNMENT.

Pennsylvania could not be the last to discover and point out the dangers of such an institution. The adoptive country of the immortal Franklin (2), will not cease to be enlightened by

(1) See the advertisement.

(2) That wonderful man was born at Boston, in New England, on the 17th of January 1706, but he has passed the greater part of his life in Pennsylvania, and he was a member of the legislative body of that state at the time of the revolution.

by his genius, and to possess citizens worthy to be his countrymen. A committee of both houses of the general court of that state, appointed to enquire into the existence, nature, object, and probable tendency or effect of the society of the *Cincinnati*, have made a report upon the subject very unfavourable indeed to the order (3).

The state of Massachusetts, which may be truly said to be the author of American liberty, and which has always distinguished itself in the confederation by the firmness and sagacity of its resolutions, has lately declared in a committee of both houses of the legislature, THAT THE SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI IS UNJUSTIFIABLE, AND THAT IF NOT PROPERLY DISCOUNTENANCED IT MAY BE DANGEROUS TO THE PEACE, LIBERTY, AND SAFETY OF THE UNITED STATES. The report of this committee, which was read to the two houses duly assembled, and was by them approved after mature deliberation, is very deserving of the attention of the public. It is in these words.

“ I. That

(3) This report is printed in the Pennsylvania Journal of the 14th of April.

' I. That the existence of the said society,
 ' appears by an attested copy of their institu-
 ' tion; and by the said institution it also ap-
 ' pears to be formed, not under the sanction
 ' or patronage of any legislative authority
 ' whatever; but self-created, and founded upon
 ' the following principles which are to be im-
 ' mutable, viz.' " *an incessant attention to pre-*
 " *serve inviolate, those exalted rights and liberties*
 " *of human nature for which they have fought and*
 " *bled, and without which the rank of a rational*
 " *being is a curse (1) instead of a blessing;*" ' and'
 " *an unalterable determination to promote and*
 " *cherish, between the respective states, that union*
 " *and national honour so essentially necessary to their*
 " *happiness, and the future dignity of the American*
 " *empire.*" ' And it also proposes, as an object,
 " *to render permanent and cordial the affection sub-*
 " *sisting among the officers, which spirit will dic-*
 " *tate brotherly kindness in all things, and parti-*
 " *cularly*

(1) To be a rational being can never be a *curse*; for it
 is by dint of reason that every kind of evil is resisted, every
 kind of good acquired, every abuse opposed, and every
 violation of natural rights, even that which the Cincin-
 nati at this moment venture on, repressed.

“ cularly extend to the most substantial acts of be-
 “ neficence, according to the ability of the society,
 “ towards those officers and their families, who
 “ unfortunately may be under the necessity of re-
 “ ceiving it.” ‘ And’ “ at each meeting the
 “ principles of the institution will be fully con-
 “ sidered, and the best measures to promote them
 “ adopted.”

‘ II. Hence it appears, that the said society
 ‘ takes upon itself the power of adopting such
 ‘ measures, as after full consideration they shall
 ‘ judge best, for promoting certain important,
 ‘ public and national purposes; for which pur-
 ‘ pose the people of these united states have
 ‘ constituted and established their respective
 ‘ legislatures and congress.

‘ III. Although it is the duty of all the citi-
 ‘ zens, in their respective capacities and general
 ‘ conduct, to afford their aid to the several
 ‘ powers of the established government, law-
 ‘ fully exercised, for the preservation of the
 ‘ common rights, and promoting the union of
 ‘ those confederate states; yet, for any class of
 ‘ men to form themselves into a select society,
 ‘ and

and convene expressly for the purpose of deli-
 berating upon, judging of and adopting mea-
 sures concerning matters, proper only for the
 cognizance of the legislative and their deter-
 mination thereon, or of such other bodies as
 are known in the constitution, or authorized
 by the laws of the land, favors of a disposition
 aspiring to become independent of lawful and
 constitutional authority, tending, if unre-
 strained, to *imperium in imperio*, and conse-
 quently to confusion and the subversion of
 public liberty.

IV. The said society, by its institution,
 assumes also the power of raising funds, and
 receiving donations unlimited by the autho-
 rity of the legislature; which funds may here-
 after be increased to an enormous value; and
 although really intended for lawful and lauda-
 ble purposes, may be converted to uses unlaw-
 ful and dangerous.

V. Moreover, as it has been found by ex-
 perience, that power and influence are inse-
 parable from property; and as the institution
 of the said society provides with great cau-
 tion and precision for regular and stated meet-
 ings,

ings, as well in districts and states, as in a general assembly of delegates from all the states, and also for the most accurate correspondence and information, an undue influence may thence be obtained, destructive of the liberties of the states, and the existence of their free constitution.

VI. The danger of such combinations appears more visibly, not only because the original members are such as have been military officers, who have been detached from the civil community, and accustomed to military laws, maxims, sentiments, habits and feelings, during a war of eight years; but the order and badges by which "the members of the society are to be known and distinguished" from their fellow-citizens, are "to be hereditary, and descend to their eldest male posterity, and in failure thereof, the collateral branches;" and it is carefully provided, that the honorary members are to be only for their lives, and the number of such members shall not exceed a ratio of one to four of the officers and their descendants;" thus securing a decided majority in the military members and their descendants.

I

VII. The

‘ VII. The danger as aforesaid is by no means
 ‘ lessened by the admission of foreign military
 ‘ officers into the said society ; who, however
 ‘ respectable their characters are, yet are the
 ‘ subjects of, and strongly attached to a govern-
 ‘ ment essentially different, in principles as well
 ‘ as form, from the republican constitutions in
 ‘ the united states.

‘ VIII. Ambition, and a lust of domination,
 ‘ are ruling passions of the human mind, most
 ‘ dangerous to civil society and government ;
 ‘ and past experience has abundantly convinced
 ‘ the world, that hereditary distinctions and
 ‘ ostentatious orders strike the minds of un-
 ‘ thinking multitudes, and favour the views
 ‘ and designs of ambitious men, often issuing
 ‘ in hereditary nobility, which is contrary to
 ‘ the spirit of free governments, and expressly
 ‘ inhibited by an article in the confederation of
 ‘ the united states.

‘ IX. The grateful regard, which posterity
 ‘ may retain to the memory of those men, who,
 ‘ in the cabinet or field, bore a distinguished
 ‘ part in emancipating their country from Bri-
 ‘ tish tyranny, and establishing liberty and in-
 ‘ dependence,

dependence, may probably impress their minds unduely, and reconcile them, at an unguarded time, to the idea of rewarding the families of such of them, as shall hold the appearance of hereditary honours, with the usual powers as well as the ostentatious distinctions of nobility.

X. The committee, after mature deliberation, are of opinion, that the said society, called the *Cincinnati*, is unjustifiable, and, if not properly discountenanced, may be dangerous to the peace, liberty, and safety of the united states in general, and this commonwealth in particular.

XI. The committee also report as their opinion, that it is proper the further consideration of measures suitable and necessary to be taken, with respect to the society of the *Cincinnati*, be referred to the next sitting of the general court.

The governor of South Carolina has addressed the assembly of that state, which was held in February last, with a speech of considerable

length, in which he has pointed out the dangers which were to be dreaded from this innovation, as well to their constitution as to their national character; in which he has exhorted them, with great force of eloquence, to vindicate themselves from the reproach of having fought, not for the deliverance of their country from slavery, but for the attainment of honours and gaudy distinctions; and has inveighed with true republican indignation against the refinements, the luxury, and the consequent corruption, which this new-invented order must spread over the country (1).

These dispositions have alarmed the *Cincinnati*. They have found that the rights of men who have newly recovered their liberty, and recovered it by their own exertions, were not to be endangered with impunity. They have accordingly, in a general assembly of the association, held at Philadelphia on the 3d of May, modified the statutes of their order. That the reader may be enabled to judge of these

(1) This speech would have been here printed at length, as it is in the original, if the translator could have procured a copy of it.

these modifications, the statutes are here printed as they were originally, and as they have since been altered.

*The INSTRUMENT of ASSOCIATION of the CIN-
CINNATI.*

‘ IT having pleased the supreme governor of
‘ the universe, in the disposition of human
‘ affairs, to cause the separation of the colonies
‘ of North America from the domination of
‘ Great-Britain, and, after a bloody conflict of
‘ eight years, to establish them free, sovereign,
‘ and independent states, connected by alliances
‘ founded on reciprocal advantage with some
‘ of the great princes and powers of the earth :

‘ To perpetuate therefore, as well the re-
‘ membrance of this great event, as the mutual
‘ friendships, which have been formed under the
‘ pressure of common danger, and in many in-
‘ stances cemented by the blood of the parties,
‘ the officers of the American army do hereby
‘ in the most solemn manner associate, con-
‘ stitute, and combine themselves into one so-
‘ ciety of friends, to endure as long as they shall
‘ endure, or any of their eldest male posterity,

‘ and in failure thereof, the collateral branches,
 ‘ who may be judged worthy of becoming its
 ‘ supporters and members.

‘ The officers of the American army, having
 ‘ generally been taken from the citizens of
 ‘ America, possess high veneration for the cha-
 ‘ racter of that illustrious Roman, *Lucius*
 ‘ *Quintius Cincinnatus*; and, being resolved to
 ‘ follow his example by returning to their citi-
 ‘ zenship, they think they may with propriety
 ‘ denominate themselves THE SOCIETY OF THE
 ‘ *CINCINNATI*.

‘ The following principles shall be immu-
 ‘ table, and form the basis of the society of the
 ‘ *Cincinnati*.

‘ An incessant attention to preserve inviolate
 ‘ those exalted rights and liberties of human
 ‘ nature, for which they have fought and bled,
 ‘ and without which the high rank of a *rational*
 ‘ being is a curse instead of a blessing.

‘ An unalterable determination to promote
 ‘ and cherish between the respective states
 ‘ that union and national honour, so essentially
 ‘ necessary to their happiness, and the future
 ‘ dignity of the American empire.

‘ To

‘ To render permanent the cordial affection
 ‘ subsisting among the officers. This spirit will
 ‘ dictate brotherly kindness in all things, and
 ‘ particularly extend to the most substantial
 ‘ acts of beneficence, according to the ability
 ‘ of the society, towards those officers and their
 ‘ families, who unfortunately may be under the
 ‘ necessity of receiving it.

‘ The general society will, for the sake of
 ‘ frequent communications, be divided into
 ‘ state societies, and those again into such dis-
 ‘ tricts as shall be directed by the state societies.

‘ The societies of the districts to meet as
 ‘ often as shall be agreed upon by the state
 ‘ societies; those of the state, on the fourth day
 ‘ of July, annually, or oftener, if they should
 ‘ find it expedient; and the general society on
 ‘ the first Monday in May, annually, so long as
 ‘ they shall deem it necessary; and afterwards,
 ‘ at least once in three years. At each meet-
 ‘ ing the principles of the institution will be
 ‘ fully considered, and the best measures to
 ‘ promote them adopted.

‘ The state societies will consist of all the
 ‘ members residing in each state respectively;

‘ and any member removing from one state to
 ‘ another, is to be considered, in all respects,
 ‘ as belonging to the society of the state in
 ‘ which he shall actually reside.

‘ The state societies to have a president,
 ‘ vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and as-
 ‘ sistant-treasurer, to be chosen annually, by a
 ‘ majority of votes, at the state meeting.

‘ Each state meeting shall write annually, or
 ‘ oftener if necessary, a circular letter to the
 ‘ other state societies, noting whatever they
 ‘ may think worthy of observation, respecting
 ‘ the good of the society, or the general union
 ‘ of the states, and giving information of the
 ‘ officers chosen for the current year. Copies
 ‘ of these letters shall be regularly transmitted
 ‘ to the secretary-general of the society, who
 ‘ will record them in a book to be assigned for
 ‘ that purpose.

‘ The state society will regulate every thing
 ‘ respecting itself and the societies of its dis-
 ‘ tricts, consistent with the general maxims of
 ‘ the *Cincinnati*, judge of the qualifications of
 ‘ the members who may be proposed, and expel
 ‘ any member, who, by a conduct inconsistent
 ‘ with

‘ with a gentleman and a man of honour, or by
 ‘ an opposition to the interests of the commu-
 ‘ nity in general, or the society in particular,
 ‘ may render himself unworthy to continue a
 ‘ member,

‘ In order to form funds which may be re-
 ‘ spectable and assist the unfortunate, each
 ‘ officer shall deliver to the treasurer of the
 ‘ state society one month’s pay, which shall
 ‘ remain for ever to the use of the state so-
 ‘ ciety, the interest only of which, if necessary,
 ‘ to be appropriated to the relief of the unfor-
 ‘ tunate.

‘ Donations may be made by persons not of
 ‘ the society, and by members of the society,
 ‘ for the express purpose of forming permanent
 ‘ funds for the use of the state society, and the
 ‘ interest of these donations appropriated in
 ‘ the same manner as that of the month’s pay.

‘ Monies, at the pleasure of each member,
 ‘ may be subscribed in the societies of the dis-
 ‘ trict, or the state societies, for the relief of the
 ‘ unfortunate members, or their widows and
 ‘ orphans, to be appropriated by the state
 ‘ society only.

‘ The

‘ The meeting of the general society shall
 ‘ consist of its officers, and a representation
 ‘ from each state society, in number not ex-
 ‘ ceeding five, whose expences shall be borne
 ‘ by their respective state societies.

‘ In the general meeting, the president, vice-
 ‘ president, secretary, assistant-secretary, trea-
 ‘ surer, and assistant-treasurer-generals, shall be
 ‘ chosen to serve until the next meeting.

‘ The circular letters which have been writ-
 ‘ ten by the respective state societies to each
 ‘ other, and their particular laws, shall be read
 ‘ and considered, and all measures concerted
 ‘ which may conduce to the general intend-
 ‘ ment of the society,

‘ It is probable, that some persons may make
 ‘ donations to the general society, for the pur-
 ‘ pose of establishing funds for the further
 ‘ comfort of the unfortunate; in which case,
 ‘ such donations must be placed in the hands
 ‘ of the treasurer-general, the interest only of
 ‘ which to be disposed of, if necessary, by the
 ‘ general meeting.

‘ Also the officers of the American army, as
 ‘ well those who have resigned with honour,
 ‘ after

‘ after three years service in the capacity of
 ‘ officers, or who have been deranged by the
 ‘ resolution of congress upon the several re-
 ‘ forms of the army, as those who shall have
 ‘ continued to the end of the war, have the
 ‘ right to become parties in this institution;
 ‘ provided that they subscribe one month’s
 ‘ pay, and sign their names to the general
 ‘ rules in their respective state societies; those
 ‘ who are present with the army, immediately;
 ‘ and others, within six months after the army
 ‘ shall be disbanded, extraordinary cases ex-
 ‘ cepted. The rank, time of service, resolu-
 ‘ tion of congress by which any have been de-
 ‘ ranged, and place of residence, must be added
 ‘ to each name: and as a testimony of affection
 ‘ to the memory and offspring of such officers
 ‘ as have died in the service, their eldest male
 ‘ branches shall have the same right of be-
 ‘ coming members as the children of the actual
 ‘ members of the society.

‘ Those officers who are foreigners, not re-
 ‘ sident in any of the states, will have their
 ‘ names enrolled by the secretary-general, and
 ‘ are to be considered as members in the societies
 ‘ of any of the states, in which they may happen
 ‘ to be.

‘ And

‘ And as there are, and will at all times be,
 ‘ men in the respective states, eminent for
 ‘ their abilities and patriotism, whose views
 ‘ may be directed to the same laudable objects
 ‘ with those of the *Cincinnati*, it shall be a rule
 ‘ to admit such characters as honorary members
 ‘ of the society for their own lives only. Pro-
 ‘ vided always, that the number of honorary
 ‘ members in each state, does not exceed a
 ‘ ratio of one to four of the officers or their
 ‘ descendants.

‘ Each state society shall obtain a list of its
 ‘ members; and at the first annual meeting the
 ‘ state secretary shall have, engrossed on parch-
 ‘ ment, two copies of the institution of the
 ‘ society, which every member present shall
 ‘ sign; and the secretary shall endeavour to
 ‘ procure the signature of every absent mem-
 ‘ ber: one of these lists to be transmitted to
 ‘ the secretary-general, to be kept in the ar-
 ‘ chives of the society, and the other to remain
 ‘ in the hands of the state secretary.

‘ From the state lists the secretary-general
 ‘ must make out, at the first general meeting,
 ‘ a complete list of the whole society, a copy
 ‘ of which he will furnish each state secretary.

‘ The

' The society shall have an *order* by which its
 ' members shall be known and distinguished ;
 ' which shall be a medal of gold, of a proper
 ' size to receive the emblems, and suspended
 ' by a deep-blue ribbon, two inches wide, edged
 ' with white, descriptive of the union of Ame-
 ' rica and France, viz.

' The principal figure to be *Cincinnatus*, three
 ' senators presenting him with a sword and
 ' other military ensigns: on a field in the back
 ' ground his wife standing at the door of their
 ' cottage ; near it a plough and other instruments
 ' of husbandry. Round the whole, *omnia reliquit*
 ' *servare rempublicam* (1). On the reverse, the
 ' sun rising, a city with open gates, and vessels
 ' entering the port ; fame crowning *Cincinnatus*
 ' with a wreath, inscribed, *virtutis præmium*.
 ' Below, hands joining, supporting a heart ;
 ' with the motto, *eslo perpetua*. Round the
 ' whole, *societas Cincinnatorum, instituta A. D.*
 ' 1783.

' The

(1) *The Cincinnati need not be ashamed of their ignorance*
of the learned languages ; on the contrary they may well pride
themselves on the contempt of a knowledge which has so little
availed the masters of it (parum placebat eas discere quippe
quæ ad virtutem doctoribus nihil profuerunt.) Nothing but
their affecting the use of those languages can render their ignorance
ridiculous.

‘ The society, deeply impressed with a sense
 ‘ of the general assistance this country has re-
 ‘ ceived from France, and desirous of perpetua-
 ‘ ting the friendships, which have been formed,
 ‘ and so happily subsisted, between the officers
 ‘ of the allied forces, in the prosecution of the
 ‘ war, direct that the president-general trans-
 ‘ mit, as soon as may be, to each of the cha-
 ‘ racters hereafter mentioned, a medal contain-
 ‘ ing the order of the society

‘ Done at Annapolis the 21st of Novemoer
 ‘ in the year 1783.’

Signed by the commander in chief, the general
 officers, and delegates of the several regi-
 ments and corps of the army.

*The INSTITUTION of the SOCIETY of the CIN-
 CINNATI, as altered and amended at their
 first general meeting.*

‘ I T having pleased the supreme governor
 ‘ of the universe to give success to the arms
 ‘ of our country, and to establish the united
 ‘ states free and independent: therefore, grate-
 ‘ fully to commemorate this event,—to incul-
 ‘ cate

cate to the latest ages the duty of laying down in peace, arms assumed for public defence, by forming an institution which recognizes that most important principle,—to continue the mutual friendships which commenced under the pressure of common danger and to effectuate the acts of beneficence, dictated by the spirit of brotherly kindness, towards those officers and their families, who unfortunately may be under the necessity of receiving them; the officers of the American army do hereby constitute themselves into *A society of friends*: and, possessing the highest veneration for the character of that illustrious Roman, *Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus*, denominate themselves **THE SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI.**

Section I. ' The persons who constitute this society, are all the commissioned and brevet officers of the army and navy of the united states, who have served three years, and who left the service with reputation; all officers who were in actual service at the conclusion of the war; all the principal staff officers of the continental army; and the officers who have been deranged by the several resolutions of congress, upon the different reforms of the army.

Sect. II.

Sect. II. ' There are also admitted into this
 ' society, the late and present ministers of his
 ' most Christian majesty to the united states;
 ' all the generals and colonels of regiments and
 ' legions of the land forces; all the admirals
 ' and captains of the navy, ranking as colonels,
 ' who have co-operated with the armies of the
 ' united states in their exertions for liberty;
 ' and such other persons as have been admitted
 ' by the respective state-meetings'

Sect. III. ' The society shall have a presi-
 ' dent, vice-president, secretary, and assistant
 ' secretary.

Sect. IV. ' There shall be a meeting of the
 ' society, at least once in three years on the
 ' first Monday in May, at such place as the
 ' president shall appoint.

' The said meeting shall consist of the afore-
 ' said officers (whose expences shall be equally
 ' borne by the state funds) and a representa-
 ' tion from each state.

' The business of this general meeting shall
 ' be,—to regulate the distribution of surplus
 ' funds ;—to appoint officers for the ensuing
 ' term,

term,—and to conform the bye-laws of state-meetings to the general objects of the institution.

Sect. V. ' The society shall be divided into state-meetings: each meeting shall have a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, respectively to be chosen by a majority of votes annually.

Sect. VI. ' The state-meetings shall be on the anniversary of independence. They shall concert such measures as may conduce to the benevolent purposes of the society; and the several state-meetings shall, at suitable periods, make application to their respective legislatures for grants of charters.

Sect. VII. ' Any member removing from one state to another, is to be considered, in all respects, as belonging to the meeting of the state in which he shall actually reside.

Sect. VIII. ' The state-meeting shall judge of the qualification of its members, admonish, and (if necessary) expel any one who may conduct himself unworthily.

K

Sect. IX.

Sect. IX. ' The secretary of each state-
' meeting shall register the names of the mem-
' bers resident in each state, and transmit a
' copy thereof to the secretary of the society.

Sect. X. ' In order to form funds for the re-
' lief of unfortunate members, their widows
' and orphans, each officer shall deliver to the
' treasurer of the state-meeting, one month's
' pay.

Sect. XI. ' No donation shall be received
' but from the citizens of the united states.

Sect XII. ' The funds of each state-meeting
' shall be loaned to the state, by permission of
' the legislature, and the interest only, annually
' to be applied for the purposes of the society;
' and, if, in process of time, difficulties should
' occur in executing the intentions of this so-
' ciety, the legislatures of the several states shall
' be entitled to make such equitable disposi-
' tion as may be most correspondent with the
' original design of the institution.

Sect. XIII. ' The subjects of his most
' Christian majesty, members of this society,
' may hold meetings at their pleasure, and
' form

- ‘ form regulations for their police, conformable
- ‘ to the objects of the institution, and to the
- ‘ spirit of their government.

Sect. XIV. ‘ The society shall have an order ;
 ‘ which shall be a bald eagle of gold, bearing on
 ‘ its breast the emblems hereafter described (1),
 ‘ suspended by a deep blue ribbon edged with
 ‘ white, descriptive of the union of America
 ‘ and France (2).

(1) They are exactly the same as are described in the first instrument of association.

(2) Most of the observations which these new regulations suggest, will be found in the comment which I have taken the liberty to make upon the circular letter, signed by General Washington.

K 2 **CIR-**

CIRCULAR LETTER,

*Addressed to the state societies of the CINCINNATI,
by the general meeting convened at Philadelphia on
the 3d of May 1784, and signed by General
Washington as president of the order.*

Gentlemen,

WE, the delegates of the Cincinnati, after
the most mature and deliberate discussion of
the principles and objects of our society,
have thought proper to recommend that the
inclosed institution of the society of the Cin-
cinnati, as altered and amended at their first
meeting, should be adopted by your state
society.

In order that our conduct on this occasion
may stand approved in the eyes of the world;
that we may not incur the imputation of ob-
stinacy on the one hand, or levity on the
other (1); and that you may be induced
more

(1) It is an unpleasant dilemma for the persons with
whom Washington is associated, and over whom he is pre-
sident, to find themselves avowedly pressed between the
reproach of *obstinacy on the one hand, and of levity on the*
other:

more cheerfully to comply with our recommendation, we beg leave to communicate the reasons on which we have acted.

Previous to our laying them before you, we hold it a duty to ourselves and to our fellow-citizens to declare, and we call heaven to witness the veracity of our declaration (2), that, in our whole agency on the subject, we have been actuated by the purest principles. Notwithstanding we are thus conscious for ourselves of the rectitude of our intentions in instituting or becoming members of this

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frater-

other: the reproach of *levity* might one way have been avoided, by doing nothing without the authority and sanction of government; as to their *obstinacy*, it would become *rebellion* after the legislature had declared its will.

(2) HONOUR THE GODS AND RESPECT OATHS* was the first precept of the ancients. True respect for oaths is to abstain from the use of them; for the surest way not to abuse is not to use them. A republic is lost when oaths cease to be the grand mystery of its politics †.

* Καὶ σεβῆς ὅρκον.

† The emperor Maximin used to call oaths, *the grand mystery of the Roman republic*, τῆς Ρωμαίων ἀρχῆς σιμὸν μυστήριον. *Herodian*. l. 8.

‘ fraternity (3); and notwithstanding we are
 ‘ confident the highest evidence can be pro-
 ‘ duced from your past, and will be given by
 ‘ your future behaviour, that you could not
 ‘ have been influenced by any other motives
 ‘ than

(3) The expression is remarkable. The *Cincinnati* are then by their own confession a military FRATERNITY; but what were the knights templars, the knights of St. John of Jerusalem, those of the Teutonic order, and those of St. Lazarus, but FRATERNITIES? And are such FRATERNITIES a very republican *acquisition*? The congress thinks otherwise, since it would not permit any of the American officers to be admitted into the order of divine providence*. It thinks otherwise, since the plan of a provincial government proposed for the ten new states, and afterwards adopted and passed into a law, contains the following article:

“ THE

* Resolution of congress of the 5th of January 1784. Upon the report of the committee to whom had been referred a letter from the commander in chief, dated the 28th of August, containing a proposal on the part of the secretary of the Polish order of divine providence, that the congress should nominate a certain number of persons proper to be created knights of that order, RESOLVED; “ That the commander in chief be
 “ desired to inform the Chevalier Jean de Hintz, secretary to the order
 “ of divine providence, that the congress is sensible of the attention of
 “ that order in proposing the nomination of a certain number of persons
 “ proper to be created knights of divine providence; but that the congress
 “ cannot consistently with the principles of the confederation accept their
 “ obliging proposal.”

‘ than those of friendship, patriotism, and benevolence (4): yet, as the instrument of our association was of necessity drawn up in a hasty manner (5), at an epocha as extraordinary as it

“ THE FORMS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS
 “ SHALL BE REPUBLICAN, AND NO PERSON POSSESS-
 “ ING AN HEREDITARY TITLE SHALL BE A CITIZEN
 “ OF THESE STATES.”

(4) Singular patriotism! by which men seclude themselves from their country! *Benevolence*—by which is to be understood *protection*. Does it then become subjects to protect their sovereign?

(5) The instrument of association of men so distinguished, which tends to raise a new body in the commonwealth, was *drawn up in a hasty manner*! Why that precipitancy? The states of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, in the memorable preambles to their constitutions, “ acknowledge the goodness of the great legislator of the universe in affording them, in the course of his providence, an opportunity, *deliberately* and peaceably, without fraud, violence, or surprise, of entering into an original, explicit, and solemn compact with each other, and of forming a new constitution of civil government for themselves and their posterity.” To violate those constitutional laws, which were made *deliberately, and without surprise*, by the instrument of an unconstitutional association, *drawn up in a hasty manner*, what is it but to insult *that goodness of the great legislator of the universe*?

' it will be memorable in the annals of man-
 ' kind—when the mind, agitated by a variety
 ' of emotions, was not at liberty to attend (6)
 ' minutely to every circumstance which re-
 ' spected our social connection, or to digest our
 ' ideas into so correct a form as could have
 ' been wished; as the original institution ap-
 ' peared in the opinion of many respectable
 ' characters to have comprehended objects
 ' which are deemed incompatible with the
 ' genius and spirit of the confederation; and as
 ' in this case it would eventually frustrate our
 ' purposes, and be productive of consequences
 ' which we had not foreseen;—therefore, to
 ' remove every cause of inquietude, to anni-
 ' hilate every source of jealousy (7), to defig-
 ' nate explicitly the ground on which we wish
 ' to stand, and to give one more proof that
 ' the

(6) Was then the institution of an illegal and uncon-
 stitutional order of knighthood a matter so urgent, as to
 render it impossible to wait till men might be AT LIBERTY
 TO ATTEND to the consequences of such a project?

(7) If you would annihilate EVERY SOURCE OF JEA-
 LOUSY, throw away your medals, and tear into pieces your
 instrument of association.

the late officers of the American army have a claim to be reckoned among the most faithful citizens, we have agreed that the following material alterations and amendments should take place: that the hereditary succession should be abolished—that all interference with political subjects should be done away,—and that the funds should be placed under the immediate cognisance of the several legislatures, who should also be requested to grant charters (8) for more effectually carrying our humane designs into execution (9).

In

(8) Why CHARTERS? only one *charter* is necessary in a country, and especially in a republic; the charter of general association; the *PACTA CONVENTA* of the country. If *charters* be granted, a corporation is established, and a military corporation! If *charters* be granted, a distinct body is engrafted into the state, and some kind of inheritance, or, at least, a perpetuity will infallibly follow. *Charters* have been granted in Europe to monks, whose privileges, though strictly forbidden to be descendible, failed not to become perpetual.

(9) No CHARTERS are necessary to exercise charity: none but what every man has received from nature. No body of men has a right to arrogate to itself the dispensation of the public bounty.

' In giving our reasons for the alteration of
 ' the first article we must ask your indulgence
 ' while we recall your attention to the original
 ' occasion which induced us to form ourselves
 ' into a society of friends. Having lived in
 ' the strictest habits of amity (10) through the
 ' various stages of a war, unparalleled in many of
 ' its circumstances ; having seen the objects for
 ' which we contended, happily attained ; in the
 ' moment of triumph and separation, when we
 ' were about to act the last pleasing melancholy
 ' scene in our military drama,—pleasing, be-
 ' cause we were to leave our country possessed
 ' of independence and peace—melancholy, be-
 ' cause we were to part, perhaps never to meet
 ' again ; while every breast was penetrated with
 ' feelings which can be more easily conceived
 ' than described ; while every little act of ten-
 ' derness recurred fresh to the recollection, it
 ' was

(10) AMITY among ten thousand men! . . . Officers who
 have fought valiantly in the same cause, in the same army,
 in the same regiment, conceive esteem, regard, often
 respect, and sometimes even veneration for one another,
 where signal talents have been exerted, or blood has been
 nobly shed FRIENDSHIP is not to be purchased at
 so low a rate !

' was impossible not to wish our friendships
 ' should be continued; it was extremely natu-
 ' ral to desire they might be perpetuated by
 ' our posterity to the remotest ages (11). With
 ' these impressions, and with such sentiments,
 ' we candidly confess we signed the institution.
 ' —We know our motives were irreproachable.
 ' —But, finding it apprehended by many of
 ' our countrymen, that this would be drawing
 ' an unjustifiable line of discrimination between
 ' our descendants and the rest of the community,
 ' and averse to the creation of unnecessary and
 ' unpleasing distinctions, we could not hesitate
 ' to relinquish every thing (12) but our personal
 ' friend-

(11) An order, a corporation, an institution of knight-
 hood, TO TRANSMIT FRIENDSHIP, TO PERPETUATE
 A FRIENDSHIP among ten thousand men, and their
 posterity!

(12) Why then not *relinquish* your medals and your rib-
 bands? Why demand charters? If the *Cincinnati* be suf-
 fered to subsist, it will be impossible to prevent their be-
 coming hereditary, even though they should for ever
 renounce (as they now pretend to do) that branch of
 their institution. Nobility, I have already observed,
 dwells in opinion. Every family will preserve the eagle
 of the *Cincinnatus* their ancestor; they will refuse to marry
 into

friendships, of which we cannot be divested;
 and those acts of beneficence which it is our
 intention should flow from them. With views
 equally pure and disinterested, we proposed
 to use our collective influence in support of
 that government (13), and in confirmation of
 that

into families, which cannot boast a similar title of nobility. So that not only the order ought to be destroyed, but the members of it owe to their country the sacrifice of the very medals which they wear. They ought to be brought in to the public treasury, to be melted down, and to be applied, as far as they will extend, in payment of the debt due to the army. That is the species of affection to which an army is entitled.

(13) How! a COLLECTIVE INFLUENCE in a commonwealth, distinct from that of the commonwealth itself! What mean you by *government*? The magistrates chosen by the people? If so, to undertake their support is unnecessary: the people will support them if they do their duty; if they neglect it, they will deserve no support: in no case ought they to be supported but by the people. Or do you mean that you will support the state? which is, indeed, very different from the government. If so, what force is or ought to be superior to that of the state: and how do you distinguish your power from that of the nation?—But it is our province to defend our country, because we are soldiers.—Admirably confessed! in short, you are a **STANDING ARMY**, that which even the nation,

once

‘ that union, the establishment of which has
 ‘ engaged so considerable a part of our lives :
 ‘ but learning from a variety of information,
 ‘ that this is deemed an officious and improper
 ‘ interference, and that if we are not charged
 ‘ with having sinister designs, yet we are accused
 ‘ of arrogating too much, and assuming the
 ‘ guardianship of the liberties of our country ;
 ‘ thus circumstanced we could not think of op-
 ‘ posing ourselves to the concurring opinion of
 ‘ our fellow-citizens, however founded (14), or
 ‘ of

once your mother country, will not tolerate. The English troops cannot become a *standing army*, because the annual consent of the representatives of the people is necessary to renew it, and an annual vote of their money to pay it. But your army finds means to recruit, and perpetuate itself independent of its pay.

(14) You *could not think* of doing what you BELIEVED YOURSELVES TO BE FOUNDED in doing! In commonwealths favour is neither shown nor received. Men there should think, say, and do, whatever they are founded in saying, thinking, or doing. Men may there say that the laws are bad, but they may not obstruct their execution. You *could not* then be *founded* in opposing the concurring opinions of your fellow-citizens, which are reduced into a law, though you might point out the changes which you conceived necessary to be made in that law. If you presume
 to

‘ of giving anxiety to those whose happiness it is
‘ our interest and duty to promote.

‘ We come next to speak of the charitable
‘ part of our institution, which we esteem the
‘ basis of it. By placing your fund in the
‘ hands of the legislature of your state, and
‘ letting them see the application is to the best
‘ purposes, you will demonstrate the integrity
‘ of your actions, as well as the rectitude of
‘ your principles (15). And having convinced
‘ them your intentions are only of a friendly
‘ and benevolent nature, we are induced to be-
‘ lieve they will patronise a design which they
‘ cannot but approve, that they will foster the
‘ good dispositions, and encourage the benefi-
‘ cent acts of those who are disposed to make
‘ use

to think that you would have been *founded* in proceeding farther, you confess that you imagined yourselves raised by the military power, with which you were invested, above the laws, and, consequently, that you were become the sovereigns of your country: but this is what you *could not mean to say*, because you could not in your consciences believe that you were yet *founded* in it.

(15) Money is no medium of DEMONSTRATION, though it is the means of weakening resistance. God grant it may not yet be used as such in so new a common-wealth!

' use of the most effectual and most unexcep-
 ' tionable mode of relieving the distressed: for
 ' this purpose it is to be hoped that charters
 ' may be obtained (16) in consequence of the
 ' applications which are directed to be made.
 ' It is also judged most proper (17) that the ad-
 ' mission of members should be submitted to
 ' the regulation of such charters, because, by
 ' thus acting in conformity to the sentiments of
 ' government, we not only give another in-
 ' stance of our reliance upon it (18); but of
 ' our

(16) Once more, there can be but one CHARTER in a
 well-governed state—the constitution. Would you have
 corporations? In Europe there are abundance of them;
 but they are erected with a view only to increase the re-
 venue: with you too money is the object held out to your
 government.

(17) IT IS JUDGED MOST PROPER! Obedience
 to the law is then for the future, amongst republicans, to
 be only a matter of *propriety*!

(18) What means your RELIANCE upon government?
 As an individual, each of you has a right to contribute
 by his vote to the control of that government, if it be-
 tray its trust. As a body, you only owe it *obedience*;
 and in that point of view it was your duty not to have
 associated but by its authority. But how can you refuse
 to place your *reliance* on those on whom your country
 firmly *relies*?

our disposition to remove every source of uneasiness respecting our society (19).

We trust it has not escaped your attention, gentlemen, that the only objects of which we are desirous to preserve the remembrance (20), are of such a nature as cannot be displeasing to our countrymen, or unprofitable to posterity: we have retained accordingly those devices which recognize the manner of returning to our citizenship; not as ostentatious marks of discrimination, but as pledges of our friendship, and emblems whose appearance will never permit us to deviate from the paths of virtue (21): and we presume, in this place,

(19) YOUR DISPOSITION! You adopt, as the Massachusetts committee wisely foresaw, the style which is in use between monarchs and sovereign powers: IMPERIUM, and consequently IMPERATOR IN IMPERIO.

(20) Those *remembrances* which you justly cherish, and which nothing can obliterate, ought to be distinguished from useless and dangerous institutions, which must render those *remembrances* less honourable to you.

(21) Ribbands flatter a childish vanity. They are tokens to call together a faction. They have oftener been the badges of conspiracy, than the symbols of a virtuous association. Such futile ornaments ill serve to attach a man to VIRTUE or to his country.

' place, it may not be inexpedient to inform
 ' you, that these are considered as the most
 ' endearing tokens of friendship, and held in
 ' the highest estimation by such of our allies
 ' as have become entitled to them, by having
 ' contributed their personal services to the
 ' establishment of our independence; that these
 ' gentlemen, who are among the first in rank
 ' and reputation, have been permitted by their
 ' sovereign to hold this grateful memorial of
 ' our reciprocal affections; and that this fra-
 ' ternal intercourse is viewed by that illustrious
 ' monarch, and other distinguished characters,
 ' as no small additional cement to that har-
 ' mony, and reciprocation of good offices,
 ' which so happily prevail between the two
 ' nations (22).

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' Having

(22) Republicans may bear respect to kings; they may
 be penetrated with gratitude towards them; but they
 ought at no time to imitate what passes in monarchies, or
 to make the opinion of a royal court the motive of their
 conduct. The country, from which you spring, loaths the
 bare idea of **SECRET INFLUENCE**. And shall her offspring
 tolerate the public invitation of a foreign influence into
 her very bosom?

' Having now relinquished whatever has
 ' been found objectionable in our original in-
 ' stitution ; having by the deference thus paid
 ' to the prevailing sentiments of the commu-
 ' nity, neither, as we conceive, lessened the
 ' dignity nor diminished the consistency of
 ' character, which it is our ambition to sup-
 ' port in the eyes of the present, as well as of
 ' future generations (23) ; having thus removed
 ' every possible objection to our remaining
 ' connected as a society, and cherishing our
 ' mutual friendships to the close of life ; and
 ' having, as we flatter ourselves, retained in its
 ' utmost latitude, and placed upon a more
 ' certain and permanent foundation, that pri-
 ' mary article of our association which respects
 ' the unfortunate ; on these two great ori-
 ' ginal pillars, FRIENDSHIP and CHARITY (24),

' we

(23) Nothing can be better established, *in the eyes of the present as well as of all future generations*, than the consideration and respect which are due to Washington, and to the other American soldiers. Nothing can shake it, but the institution of their military fraternity. But it is to be hoped, that the institution itself will be abandoned.

(24) Be good CITIZENS before you be FRIENDS. Be JUST before you be CHARITABLE.

‘ we rest our institution ; and we appeal to
 ‘ your liberality, patriotism and magnanimity,
 ‘ to your conduct on every other occasion, as
 ‘ well as to the purity of your intentions on the
 ‘ present, for the ratification of our proceed-
 ‘ ings. At the same time we are happy in ex-
 ‘ pressing a full confidence in the candour,
 ‘ justice and integrity of the public, that the
 ‘ institution as now altered and amended will
 ‘ be perfectly satisfactory (25), and that acts
 ‘ of legislative authority will soon be passed to
 ‘ give efficacy to your benevolence (26).

‘ Before we conclude this address, permit us
 ‘ to add, that the cultivation of that amity
 ‘ we profess, and the extension of this charity,
 ‘ we flatter ourselves, will be objects of suffi-
 ‘ cient importance to prevent a relaxation in
 ‘ the prosecution of them—to diffuse com-
 ‘ fort and support to any of our unfortunate
 ‘ companions who have seen better days, and

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‘ merited

(25) How can your institution be *satisfactory to the public*, from which it seeks to distinguish you ?

(26) Do you then threaten the legislative power to withhold your *benevolence*, unless acts be passed in your favour destructive of the original contract of the con-
 stitution ?

* merited a milder fate ; to wipe the tear from
 * the eye of the widow, who must have been
 * consigned, with her helpless infants, to indi-
 * gence and wretchedness, but for this chari-
 * table institution—to succour the fatherless—
 * to rescue the female orphan from destruc-
 * tion (27)—to enable the son to emulate the
 * virtues of his father, will be no unpleasing
 * task: it will communicate happiness to
 * others (28), while it increases our own;
 * it will cheer our solitary reflections, and
 * soothe our latest moments.—Let us then
 * pro-

(27) Fatal discovery! Already then the most virtuous
 of the Americans are corrupted to such a degree, that
 amongst them poor orphan girls are exposed to DESTRU-
 CTION! And they themselves confess it! Beauty and virtue
 are no longer, in their eyes, sufficient endowments to en-
 title them to an honourable alliance! Portions are neces-
 sary! Ambition and avarice already govern their mar-
 riages! Honourable love begins to retire from their
 coasts! The new world is no more!

(28) *Let not thy left hand, says the scripture, know the
 good which thy right hand doeth.* But the Cincinnati,
 displaying their blue-ribbon, exclaim, WE ARE THEY
 WHO DO GOOD TO ALL MANKIND, while the object
 which engrosses the attention of the republic is the eagle,
 a bird never distinguished for its beneficence.

‘ prosecute with ardour what we have instituted
 ‘ in sincerity ; let heaven and our own con-
 ‘ sciences approve our conduct ; let our actions
 ‘ be the best comment on our words ; and
 ‘ let us leave a lesson to posterity, THAT THE
 ‘ GLORY OF SOLDIERS CANNOT BE COMPLETED,
 ‘ WITHOUT ACTING WELL THE PART OF CITI-
 ‘ ZENS (29).

‘ Signed by order,

‘ G. WASHINGTON, PRESIDENT.’

(29) *The glory of soldiers cannot be completed without acting well the part of citizens.* Here, at length, we recognize Washington, and the language, which becomes that wise and noble benefactor of the world. After having pleaded the cause of his armed fraternity, he resumes the natural sentiments of affection which he feels for their elders, the national fraternity.

THE GLORY OF SOLDIERS CANNOT BE COMPLETED
 WITHOUT ACTING WELL THE PART OF CITIZENS.

May that noble precept be transmitted to posterity ! May it be the condemnation of every soldier who shall fancy himself at liberty to form attachments to any other society than his country ! Attachments incompatible with his duties ! If ever there were a man worthy to teach the world, that the noblest of rewards is the esteem of our country, deserved and not extorted ; that the brightest of ornaments is virtue, which cannot be concealed ; that the most honourable of privileges is to be the member of a sovereignty, which it has been our singular good fortune to found by our valour, and to enlighten by our reason, that man was WASHINGTON,

A
L E T T E R

FROM

MONS^R TURGOT,

COMPTROLLER of the FINANCES in FRANCE,

TO

DOCTOR PRICE.

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L E T T E R

FROM

MONSIEUR TURGOT,

COMPTROLLER of the FINANCES in FRANCE,

TO

DOCTOR PRICE,

Dated at PARIS, 22d March 1778.

DR. Franklin has sent me, Sir, as from you, the new edition of your *Observations on civil liberty, &c.* I have to thank you doubly; first, for the work itself, of which I have long known the value, and which upon its first publication I read with avidity, notwithstanding the multiplicity of business, in which I was engaged; and in the next place, for your candour in suppressing the imputation of want of address (1), which you had

(1) This relates to some details respecting M. Turgot's administration, which are mentioned in Dr. Price's second

had inserted, among many things much to my advantage, in your *Additional observations*. I might have deserved the imputation, if you had meant no other want of address than that of
not

second Treatise upon civil liberty, and upon the American war (p. 150, &c.) In the first edition of that work, Dr. Price had included *want of address* among the causes of M. Turgot's removal. That minister, in an excellent letter, informed the virtuous author what were the true causes of his dismissal. This gave rise to a correspondence which was kept up till M. Turgot's death, and of which this letter forms a part.

It becomes the virtuous and the enlightened of every nation, to lament this friend of humanity, this philosopher, who was great by his knowledge, great by his genius, and still greater by his virtues; who, while favoured by kings, resident in courts, and engaged in business, preserved such just principles, sentiments, and opinions, and who was prevented from restoring a kingdom, the faults or wisdom of which are attended with consequences so important to the human species. Of all those who have ever held the reins of government, Marcus Aurelius, perhaps, alone was worthy to have left behind him such a work. Marcus Aurelius lived a public blessing, and as such he was, and still is, adored; while Turgot was not suffered in France to continue for two years a minister! And in the present generation, in that generation which has reaped the fruits of his labour and of his beneficence, is still found a multitude of his enemies and detractors!

not being able to discover the secret springs of those intrigues, which were practised against me by persons much more adroit in that respect than I am, or than I ever shall, or ever desire to be; but I understood you to charge me with a want of address in grossly shocking the general opinion of my nation; and, had that been your meaning, I believe, you would not have done justice either to me or to my nation, which is much more enlightened than is generally thought by yours; and which is, perhaps, more easily prevailed on to adopt rational ideas even than the English. I conclude this as well from having seen your countrymen so infatuated with the absurd project of subduing America, that nothing could in the least open their eyes till the capture of Burgoyne; as from that system of monopoly and exclusion which is in vogue with all your political writers upon commerce, except Mr. Adam Smith and Dean Tucker, and which is the true source of the loss of your colonies; and from all your controversial writings upon the questions, which for these twenty years past have been discussed amongst you, in not one of which that I remember to have read, till your observations were published, is the question considered in its true point of view. I

never

never could conceive how a nation, which has so successfully cultivated every branch of the natural sciences, could remain so far inferior to itself in the most important of all sciences, that of public happiness; a science, in which the liberty of the press, that exists nowhere else, must have given it such vast advantages over every other country in Europe. Is it national pride which has prevented you from availing yourselves of those advantages? Is it, because you were something less ill off than others, that you applied all your speculations to persuade yourselves that you need not be better? Is it the spirit of party, and an anxiety to secure popular favour, which has retarded your improvement, by disposing your political writers to treat as idle metaphysics (2) all speculations, which tend to establish fixed principles upon the rights and the true interests of individuals, and of nations? How happens it that you are almost the first English writer who has entertained just ideas of liberty, and who has demonstrated the falsehood of that notion, which has been worn threadbare

by

(2) See Mr. Burke's letter to the sheriffs of Bristol.

by almost every republican writer, that liberty consists in being subject to nothing but the laws, as if a man oppressed by an unjust law were free ; a proposition which would not be true, even upon the supposition that all the laws were made by an actual national convention ; for in fact, every individual has personal rights, which the nation cannot deprive him of, but by an act of violence, and by an illegal use of the national strength. Though you have attended to this truth, and have been very explicit upon it, yet perhaps it deserves to be even still more enforced and illustrated, considering the little attention which has been paid to it by the warmest advocates for liberty.

It is to me equal matter of astonishment, that in England, it should not be a common-place truth to say, that one nation never can have a right to govern another, and that such a government can be founded only on violence, which is the foundation too of robbery, and of tyranny ; that a tyranny exercised by a people, is, of all known tyrannies, the most cruel and insupportable, and that which leaves the fewest resources to the wretches it oppresses ; for a single tyrant is under the restraint of self-interest, or the control

control of remorse, or public opinion; but a multitude looks not to its interest, feels not remorse, and decks itself with glory, when it most deserves disgrace.

Events have proved for the English nation a dreadful comment upon your book. They have been for some months past precipitating themselves with a most accelerated rapidity. With respect to America the catastrophe is already arrived. She has thrown off her dependence, never to return to it. Will she be free and happy? Will this new people, which possesses such advantages for setting the world an example of a constitution, where man may enjoy all his rights, exert all his faculties, and be governed only by nature, reason, and justice, know how to form such a constitution? Will they know how to fix it upon an everlasting basis, and to prevent all the causes of division and corruption which may insensibly undermine and destroy it?

I am not satisfied, I confess, with the constitutions hitherto established by the different states of America. In that of Pennsylvania you blame, with reason, the religious test imposed on every person admitted into the representative body; but it is much worse in some others of them.

them. One (I think it is that of the Jerseys) requires a belief of the divinity of Jesus Christ (3). In most of them I find an unmeaning imitation of English customs. Instead of making all authorities in the state converge into one, that of the nation, they have established distinct bodies; a house of representatives, a council, and a governor; because England has its house of commons, its house of lords, and its king. They endeavour to balance exactly these different powers; as if that equipoise, which may have been deemed necessary to prevent the enormous preponderance of royalty, could be of any use in republics, founded upon the equality of all the citizens; and as if every thing, which tended to establish different bodies in the state, were not a source of divisions. In seeking to prevent chimerical, they give birth to real dangers. They would guard against the clergy, and therefore unite them

(3) It is the constitution of Delaware that imposes this test: that of the Jerseys, with a noble liberality, orders, that there shall never in that province be any establishment of any one religious sect in preference to another; and that all protestants, of all persuasions, shall enjoy equal rights and privileges.

them all under the banner of one common proscription. By making them ineligible, they form them into a body, and into a body estranged from the state. Why is a citizen, who has the same interest as other men in the common defence of his liberty and his property, to be excluded from contributing to it by his knowledge and his virtues, only because he is of a profession to which knowledge and virtues are essentially requisite? The clergy are never dangerous, but when they form a body in the state, when they conceive themselves to have rights and interests as a body, and when it has been thought proper to have a religion established by law; as if men could have any right, or any interest, to rule the consciences of others; as if it were in the power of an individual to sacrifice to the advantages of civil society those opinions on which he supposes his eternal salvation to depend; as if men were to be saved or damned in the gross. Where true toleration, that is to say, the absolute incompetence of government over the consciences of individuals, is established, an ecclesiastic admitted into the national assembly is a citizen; when excluded from it, he becomes again an ecclesiastic.

I don't

I don't find that they have been careful enough to reduce, as much as possible, the number of objects which are to occupy the government of each state; to separate matters of legislation from those of a general, and of a particular and local administration; nor to establish local standing assemblies, which, by discharging almost all the subordinate functions of government, might spare the general assembly all attention to those matters, and might prevent all opportunity, and perhaps all desire in its members, of abusing an authority which cannot be applied to any objects but those which are general, and which therefore are not exposed to the little passions which actuate mankind.

I don't find that they have attended to the grand, and, indeed, the only natural distinction among men, that between the proprietors and the non-proprietors of land; to their different interests, and consequently to their different rights with respect to legislation, to the administration of justice and of police, to their contribution towards the public expenditure, and to the application of the public money.

M

No

No fixed principle of taxation is established; but it is presumed, that each province may at pleasure tax itself; may impose personal taxes, taxes upon consumption or upon importation; or, in other words, may create for itself an interest, contrary to the interest of the other provinces.

The right of regulating its commerce is presumed to reside in every distinct state. The executive power, or the governors in each, are even authorised to prohibit the exportation of certain commodities in certain events: so far are they from perceiving, that the law of a perfect liberty of commerce is a necessary consequence of the right of property: so deeply are they still involved in the mist of European delusions.

In the general union of the provinces, I don't find a coalition, a fusion, of all the parts into one body, into one homogeneous whole. It is nothing but an aggregation of parts, distinct from one another, and which by the diversity of their laws, manners, and opinions, by the inequality of their present forces, and still more by the inequality of their future progresses, must
have

have a perpetual tendency to divide. It is nothing more than a copy of the republic of Holland, though Holland had not, like America, to fear the possible increase of any of its provinces. The whole edifice, as yet, rests upon the unsolid basis of the old and vulgar system of politics; upon the prejudice, that nations and provinces may, as national or provincial bodies, have an interest different from what individuals have to be free, and to defend their property against robbers and conquerors; an imaginary interest to trade more extensively than others, not to buy merchandize from foreigners, to compel foreigners to consume the growth of their country, and the produce of their manufactures; an imaginary interest to possess a more extensive territory, to acquire this or that island or village; an interest to strike terror into other nations; an interest to surpass them in military glory, or in the sciences, and the arts.

Some of these prejudices are fomented in Europe, because there an ancient rivalry of nations, and the ambition of princes, forces all states to keep themselves in arms for self-defence against their armed neighbours, and to consider

military force as the primary object of government.

It is the happiness of America, that, for a long time to come, she cannot have to dread any foreign enemy, unless she be divided within herself; so that she may, and ought, to form a just estimate of these imaginary interests, these subjects of discord, which are alone formidable to liberty. Where the sacred principle of considering freedom of commerce as a consequence of the right of property is adopted, all imaginary interests of commerce vanish. All imaginary interests of possessing more or less territory vanish, where the principle is adopted that the territory belongs not to nations, but to the private owners of the land; that the question whether this district, or that village, should belong to this province, or to that state, ought to be decided, not by the imaginary interest of the province, or of the state, but by the real interest which the inhabitants of the district, or of the village, have to meet together for the regulation of their affairs in the place where they can most conveniently attend; that this interest, being to be measured by the greater or less distance which a man can travel from the place

place of his abode, in order to transact any important business, without detriment to his ordinary concerns, becomes a natural measure of the extent of jurisdictions and of states, and establishes among them all an equipoise of extent and of force (4), which prevents all danger of inequality, and all pretension to superiority.

The interest of being feared does not exist for those who require nothing from any one, and who are in a situation where they cannot be attacked, even by considerable forces, with any prospect of success.

Warlike renown is not equal to the happiness of living in peace. The glory of excelling in the arts, and in the sciences, is open to whoever aspires to it: it is a harvest where all may reap: the field of discovery is inexhaustible; and all men profit by the discoveries of all.

M 3

The

(4) The inequality of extent and of force, which subsists between the different states, appears to me to be the most unfavourable circumstance in the situation of the Americans. *Vide infra* the notes upon Dr. Price's work.

The Americans do not yet, I believe, feel all these truths as they must feel them, to ensure the happiness of their posterity. I do not censure their leaders. It was necessary to provide for the exigencies of the moment by such a union as could be formed against an imminent and formidable enemy ; there was no time to think of correcting the defects of the constitution, and of the composition of the different states. But they ought now to beware of perpetuating those defects, and to consider how to unite all opinions and interests in the different provinces, and give them a direction to some uniform principles.

In this respect they have great obstacles to surmount. In Canada (5) the constitution of the Roman Catholic clergy, and the existence of a body of nobility:

In

(5) M. Turgot seems to have thought the union of Canada with the American republic inevitable. Canada, however, still belongs to England, and yet the philosopher was not mistaken. *If it were in the nature of modern politics to do at once what will infallibly become necessary at last,* England would, to the joy of all true friends to her prosperity, give over those ruinous speculations upon Canada which she now pursues.

In New-England the still subsisting spirit of a rigid puritanism, which is said to be still somewhat intolerant.

In Pennsylvania the religious prejudices of a very great number of citizens, who, by holding the profession of arms to be unlawful, and consequently refusing to submit to any regulations requisite for establishing the military force of the state upon a union of the characters of citizen and of warrior, necessarily convert the profession of a soldier into the trade of a mercenary.

In the southern colonies too great an inequality of fortunes, and much more the vast multitude of negro slaves, whose servitude is incompatible with a good political constitution, and who, were they restored to freedom, would still, by forming two distinct nations in the state, involve it in much difficulty.

In all the states inveterate prejudices, an attachment to established forms, the habit of paying certain taxes, an apprehension of others to be substituted in their place, the vain opinion which some colonies entertain of their own superior power, and a melancholy dawning of

national pride. I believe the Americans to be under a necessity of extending their territory, not by war, but by cultivation. Were they to leave behind them those immense deserts which stretch quite to the North Pacific Ocean, they would soon see them infested with a settlement of exiles, and of outlaws, mingled with savages; in short, with clans of robbers, who would lay America waste, as the barbarians of the north desolated the Roman empire. Hence would result another danger, the necessity of being always in arms upon the frontier, and of being in a state of perpetual war. The colonies bordering upon the frontier would consequently be more warlike than the rest, and this inequality of military force would be a terrible spur to ambition. The remedy for this inequality would be to keep up a standing military power, towards which each province should contribute in proportion to its population; and yet the Americans, who still entertain all those apprehensions, which would well become the English, dread above all things a standing army. In this they are wrong. Nothing is more easy than so to unite the institution of a standing army with a militia, as to improve the latter; and even to give additional strength

strength to liberty. But it is not easy to quiet the fears which such an institution would excite.

These are considerable difficulties ; and, perhaps, the private interests of powerful individuals will concur with the prejudices of the multitude, in opposing the exertions of true wisdom and sincere patriotism.

It is impossible not to offer up prayers, that this people may attain the highest degree of prosperity of which they are susceptible. They are the hope of human nature; they may become its great example. They ought, by their conduct, to prove to the world, that mankind may be free, and at peace, and can do without every species of shackles which tyrants and impostors of every garb have sought to impose upon them, under pretence of the public good. They ought to set the example of political liberty, of religious liberty, of liberty of commerce, and of industry. The asylum which they open to the oppressed of all nations ought to console the earth. The ease with which men may avail themselves of this advantage, by escaping from the oppression of a bad government, will force governments to become just, and wise. The rest of mankind will gradually

dually become sensible of the vanity of those delusions, with which politicians have so long lulled themselves to rest. But this can never happen, if America guard not against those delusions, or if it become, as your ministerial writers have so often foretold, the counterpart of Europe, a mass of divided powers, contending together for territory, or for the emoluments of commerce, and constantly cementing the slavery of the people with the people's blood.

The wise and the humane of every nation, ought, at this juncture, to unite their knowledge, and combine their reflections, with those of the sagacious Americans, to promote the grand work of their legislation. This, Sir, is a task worthy of you. I would fain that it were in my power to quicken your zeal for it. This was my only object in indulging upon this occasion the effusion of my ideas more freely perhaps than was proper; and I hope it will apologize for my having troubled you so long. I own I am anxious that the blood which already has been, and which still must be spilt in this dispute, may not have been lost for the happiness of mankind.

Our

Our two nations are on the point of doing each other a great deal of harm, and probably without any real benefit to either. An increase of debt and of places, perhaps a national bankruptcy, and the ruin of a great number of individuals, is all that it is likely to end in. These are events which seem nearer at hand in England than in France. If instead of plunging into this war, you could have acquitted yourselves with a good grace at first; if it had been in the nature of modern politics to have done at once what will infallibly become necessary at last; if the national opinion could have permitted your government to prevent events, supposing it to have foreseen them; if it could have consented at the outset to the independence of America, without making war at all, I firmly believe you would have lost nothing by the change. Now you must lose what you have already expended, and must still expend; you must for some time suffer a vast diminution of your commerce, great domestic revolutions if you be driven to bankruptcy, and, in all events, a vast diminution of political influence abroad. But this last consequence is of very little importance to the real happiness of a people, and I am very far from agreeing with the Abbé Raynal in your motto:

motto (6). I do not think that this will ever make you a contemptible nation, and deliver you over to slavery.

On the contrary, your calamities will perhaps have the effect of a necessary amputation: they are, perhaps, the only means of saving you from the canker of luxury and corruption. If amongst your commotions you can correct your constitution, by making elections annual, by distributing the right of representation in a manner more equal, and better proportioned to the interests of the constituents, you will, perhaps, gain as much as America by the revolution, for your liberty will still be left you, and with liberty, and by dint of liberty, all your other losses will soon be repaired.

You may judge, Sir, by the freedom with which I unbosom myself to you upon these delicate subjects, of the degree of esteem which

(6) "Should the morals of the English be perverted; by luxury; should they lose their colonies by restraining them, &c. they will be enslaved; they will become insignificant and contemptible; and Europe will not be able to shew the world one nation in which she can pride herself."

you have inspired me with, and of the satisfaction I feel in finding that there is some similarity in our ways of thinking.

I write this with a firm reliance on your secrecy. I must even entreat you not to answer me at all in detail by the post, for your letter would inevitably be opened in our post-office, and I should be thought much too good a friend to liberty for a minister, and even for a minister in disgrace.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(Signed) **TURGOT.**

A SHORT

1871

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A
SHORT ABSTRACT
OF A WORK LATELY PRINTED
BY DR. PRICE,
ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION,
AND THE MEANS OF MAKING IT
A BLESSING TO THE WORLD:
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
REFLECTIONS AND NOTES
UPON THAT WORK

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author not having published the work, of which the following is an abstract, in England, the editor has abridged it by his permission. Though immediately intended for America, he conceives that the advice and the principles it contains, will by no means be uninteresting to this country; at least, he is convinced that they are much more necessary to Great Britain, in its present corrupt and degraded condition.

February 1st, 1785.

A SHORT ABSTRACT OF
DOCTOR PRICE'S WORK
ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

THIS work is entitled, *Observations on the importance of the American revolution, and the means of making it a benefit to the world.* By Richard Price, D.D. L.L. D. and fellow of the royal society of London, and of the academy of arts and sciences in New-England. Printed in London in 1784. It contains 110 pages, 8vo; and is dedicated "to the free and united states of America."

The work naturally divides itself into two parts:

I. THE IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCES I. ITS CON-
OF THE REVOLUTION, AND THE SEQUENCES,
AND THE
N MEANS MEANS OF

PERPETU-
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THEM.

MEANS OF GIVING THEM THEIR FULL EFFECT, AND PERPETUATING THEM.

In a preliminary chapter, after congratulating the world in general, and America in particular, on the happy issue of the late war, the author takes a view of its beneficial consequences to mankind, by disseminating just sentiments of their rights, and of the nature of legitimate government; by exciting a spirit of resistance to tyranny; by establishing in America forms of government more equitable than any yet known; and by providing an asylum for oppressed men in every region of the globe. He considers the world as now moving on rapidly towards perfection, and instances the wonderful additions to the power and dignity of man, by the inventions of printing, optical glasses, gun-powder, &c. &c. "Who," says he, "even at the beginning of this century, would have thought, that in a few years they would acquire the power of subjecting to their wills the dreadful force of lightning, and of flying in ærostatic machines (1)?"

But this revolution he considers as the most important step in the course of human improvement,

(1) See note I.

ment, next to the introduction of Christianity. He sees the hand of providence guiding the whole, and, by the emancipation of America, preparing the way for that improved state of human affairs, which, as revelation teaches, will take place before the consummation of all things.

He then proceeds to point out those objects, which merit the attention of the united states.

I. THE PAYMENT OF THEIR DEBTS. On 1. Debts.

this subject he observes, that they have an infant credit to cherish, which being lost, their character and honour is gone. That by disposing of the unlocated lands to the army, and to emigrants, the greatest part of their debts may be sunk immediately. But, even without this, supposing their debt to be nine millions sterling, at $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, taxes producing one million *per annum* would pay the interest, and leave an annual surplus of half a million for a sinking fund, which would discharge the principal in thirteen years. After the discharge of the debt, he recommends

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100,000l.

100,000*l.* *per ann.* of the revenue to be still kept up, and laid out in clearing unlocated lands, &c. which should form a continental property, to be applied only to public purposes. Such a reserve, he says, if improved so as to leave a profit of 5 *per cent.* would produce 3 millions in 19 years, 30 millions in 57 years, 100 millions in 81 years, &c. And, if improved so as to produce a profit of 10 *per cent.* it would increase to 5 millions in 19 years, 100 millions in 49 years (2), &c.

He considers sinking funds, if kept sacred and never diverted, as an omnipotent resource to extinguish debts, and supply future emergencies: but, if left unguarded, and suffered to be misapplied, as the worst of evils, in giving ministers the command of a revenue for the purposes of corruption (3).

2. THE

(2) See the Reflections, at the end of this abstract.

(3) The latter part of this remark is certainly founded in wisdom. But the utility either of a sinking fund, by which we mean a fund established for the liquidation of an existing debt, or of a national treasure instituted to supply future emergencies, may well be questioned. The latter will certainly always operate either as an engine of corruption

2. THE PRESERVATION OF PEACE. Dis-2. Peace.

putes between individuals are decided by a court of law, *i. e.* by the wisdom and justice of the state. The decision is enforced by the civil power of the state.

The

ruption to the minister, or as a temptation to the people to enter into a (perhaps unjust) war. And, as it is unreasonable that posterity should be loaded with the burthens of our wars, so does it seem unjust that we should be compelled to contribute to the prosecution of the wars of our posterity. In fact, there is no reason why every age should not bear its own burthens. The expence which attends war is one of the chief inducements to peace. A national treasure removes this inducement, by enabling a nation to make war at the expence of their ancestors. Sinking funds, as they are managed at present, answer no purpose but the worst purposes of a national treasure. Indeed, melancholy experience has shewn, that it is impossible to prevent them from being misapplied. How often have the parliament of Great Britain declared the uses to which the sinking fund was to be appropriated! Have they not repeatedly protested against its misapplication and diversion? And yet, has it not, of late years, been regularly and uniformly misapplied and diverted? Have not near twenty-five millions been taken from the produce and surpluses of this fund, at different times, for the service of the current year, in the course of the American war? It is more than probable, that, had the sinking fund been untouched, that war would have ceased at least two years before its actual period. For, when the people feel the burthens of

N 3

a war,

The author suggests, that, by a similar method, a universal peace may some time or other be effected (4).

The articles of confederation make considerable advances towards preserving a perpetual peace among the united states, by referring all disputes to the decision of congress. But he thinks this insufficient; and

a war, they are naturally induced to consider, whether it be a war of necessity, or of misguided ambition.

But, it may be said, the misapplication complained of arises from your fund's not being guarded. The answer is, it is impossible to guard it. What stronger guard can be conceived, than that imposed on the national treasure of the Athenians, instituted for the purpose of repelling invasions, where death was the penalty of even proposing a law to divert it? Yet Pericles got that law repealed, and another passed for the distribution of the produce among the populace of Athens, to procure them admittance to the theatre. And shortly afterwards, one Eubulus procured another law, ensuring its application to this disgraceful purpose, by the same penalty which had guarded its former appropriation. Nor could all the eloquence of Demosthenes prevail on the people to give it up to the public emergencies.

(4) The most celebrated plans for a general peace are those of Henry IV. of France, the Abbé St. Pierre, with Rousseau's remarks; and Dr. Price, in his *Observations on civil liberty*. There is still another work, very little

and that congress ought to have the power of collecting the force of the confederacy, to carry its decisions into execution: this force to consist, not of a standing army, but of a regular, well-disciplined militia of armed citizens.

He likewise advises the states, to empower congress to contract debts, and provide funds to discharge them (5).

3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SYSTEM 3. Liberty.
OF PERFECT LIBERTY, BOTH CIVIL AND
RELIGIOUS.

By *perfect liberty* is meant a freedom from all restraint, except such as prevents one man from injuring another in his person, property, or good name.

little known, which contains several useful hints for such a project. It was printed at Paris, in 1782, at the expence of a character distinguished for his attachment to liberty and science, and is intituled, *Conciliateur de toutes les nations d'Europe, ou projet de paix perpétuelle entre tous les souverains de l'Europe & leurs voisins. Par P. A. G.* Very small 8vo.

(5) See the Reflections.

This

This liberty includes,

1. Liberty of conduct in all civil matters.

2. Liberty of discussing all speculative matters, public measures, and the conduct of public men, and all speculative and doctrinal points.

And on this head the author strongly insists, that the civil government has no right to punish men for opposing sacred doctrines, or maintaining pernicious opinions.

3. Liberty of conscience in matters of religion.

Here he reprobates the idea of human authority in matters of religion; and particularly urges the dangers and inconveniences of church establishments. In this respect he gives all praise to the liberality which pervades the constitutions of Massachusetts and North Carolina,

lina, where *every denomination of christians* (he wishes they had said *all men of all religions*) are equally put under the protection of the law.

For the same reason he dislikes the tests imposed on the representatives of the people by the several American constitutions. Such tests exclude only honest men. The dishonest never scruple them.

4. EDUCATION: which is the grand⁴. Education. means of perpetuating all these advantages. The education he recommends is an initiation into candor, rather than into systems of faith: whereas the present ordinary course of education consists in instilling particular opinions, rather than in qualifying men to investigate truth; and consequently tends to contract, and not to enlarge the intellectual faculties. For which reason persons so educated are actually in a worse state, than men who have had no education at all: and men trained up in colleges are the most bigoted
to

to their old errors, and the greatest enemies to all new discoveries. For this purpose he recommends the study of the mathematics, as admirably adapted to give the mind a general habit of investigating truth, and detecting falsehood, unless that study be so closely pursued, as totally to absorb the mind in mathematical pursuits, and disqualify it from thinking at large.

On this subject he notices the necessity of inculcating the following observation; that men are generally most tenacious when most in the wrong, and fancy themselves most enlightened when most in the dark.

II. THE DANGERS TO WHICH AMERICA IS EXPOSED. II. THE DANGERS, AS WELL CIVIL AS MORAL, TO WHICH THE AMERICAN STATES ARE EXPOSED.

And here our author speaks with full confidence, that his *mean advice*, as he modestly terms it, will meet with all the attention it deserves. In England, when any improvements are proposed, or any corrections are attempted,

tempted, of abuses so gross, as to make our boasts of liberty ridiculous (6), a clamour immediately arises against innovation, and an alarm is spread, lest the attempt to repair should destroy. In America, no such prejudices can operate. There, abuses are not sanctified by time, and reason may lift up her voice with confidence and success.

1. DEBTS.

1. Debts.

2. INTERNAL WARS.

2. Internal wars.

Both these subjects are before discussed in the first and second divisions of part I.

3. INEQUALITY.

3. Inequality

1. Of

(6) "The majority of the British house of commons is chosen by a few thousands of the dregs of the people, who are constantly paid for their votes.—Is it not ridiculous to call a country so governed free?" See note II.

1. Of rank. And, to exclude this mischief, the author is happy to find, that the articles of confederation have already prohibited hereditary honours, and titles of nobility; odious distinctions, which necessarily dispose the possessors to be hostile to general liberty.

2. Of property.

The happiest state of man is that mediocrity between barbarism and luxury, where equality of condition produces a hardy, laborious, incorrupt race of yeomanry, and is necessarily followed by long life, early marriages, a rapid increase of population, &c. &c. Luxury, the handmaid of wealth, is in general too ready to overturn these happy effects. To preserve this equality, and its consequences, as long as possible, some great men (Plato, Sir Thomas More, Mr. Wallace (7), &c.) have proposed plans, pleasing in theory, and perhaps not altogether impracticable.

To

(7) See note III.

To obviate this mischievous inequality of property as much as possible, our author warns them against two of its grand causes.

1. The right of primogeniture: an absurd distinction arising from a vain-glorious desire of raising a name by accumulating property in one branch of a family (4).

2. Foreign

(4) It is curious to observe the glaring injustice committed by the municipal laws of most countries in the distribution of the real estates of intestates. By the Jewish law they were divided among the sons, the eldest taking a portion twice as large as each of his brethren, and the daughters were totally excluded, unless there were no sons. This is at present, as the writer has been informed by a person of high character and much information, the rule of descent in the province of Massachusetts. And several years ago, there was a long debate in the house of assembly, whether the double portion should be given to the eldest or to the youngest son—the decision was in favour of the former; surely without much reason: for, if there must be a preference, the youngest is much more likely to stand in need of it than his eldest brother. By the Athenian law, the sons took equally, to the exclusion of the daughters. This is much like the custom of Gavelkind, which is the law of descent in Kent. But, by the law of inheritance, now generally prevalent in Europe, and far excelling all the rest both in absurdity and injustice, the younger

2. Foreign trade. And for this see the next division.

4. Foreign trade.

4. FOREIGN TRADE. After admitting, that commerce with foreign nations has its use in removing local prejudices, extending benevolence, and repressing within due bounds that love of our country, which, if exercised in promoting its internal liberty and happiness, and its independence on foreign nations, is the noblest of passions, but which, degenerating into a spirit of rivalry and a thirst of dominion, becomes a most destructive principle: after admitting, that it enables us to draw from other countries conveniencies, we cannot find within ourselves, he declares his opinion, that these uses of foreign trade are of little importance to the large continent

younger sons, and all the daughters, are totally excluded, in favour of the eldest son. This barbarous custom is justified on feudal principles, when feuds no longer exist. It is justified on the principle of keeping up rich families, as if one branch were to be enriched by the impoverishment of twenty others. In truth and reason it is utterly unjustifiable. The only rational and equitable law of descent is that which is given by the Roman law, where all the sons and daughters taken by equal shares.

continent of America, which produces within itself not only every necessary but every convenience of life; which is so intersected with vast rivers and extensive lakes, as to form an inland communication unknown in any other region. Nor need they be anxious for a great naval force. They have no powerful neighbours. The Atlantic must be crossed, before they are attacked. They are all a well-trained militia; and their late successful resistance will discourage future invasions.

They can draw nothing but infection from foreign connections. Let them, therefore, guard themselves by heavy duties on importations. But particularly let them guard their MANNERS. Let them beware of a passion for foreign frippery. When such a passion is awakened, farewell that simplicity of manners, that manliness of spirit, that disdain of tinsel, the stamp of true dignity! Then will effeminacy, servility, and venality, break in and overwhelm liberty and virtue. Better to be plain and honest farmers, than opulent merchants. The purest manners, and the greatest happiness, are to be found in

in those inland parts of America, where agriculture gives health and plenty, and trade is unknown: while luxury, vice, and misery, are resident in great towns and seaports.

Foreign trade, by increasing importation to feed luxury and prodigality, will carry out their coin, and substitute a delusive paper currency. Paper credit is the greatest of all conveniencies, and therefore the greatest of all temptations. A public bank, while it can circulate its bills, facilitates commerce, and assists the exertions of a state in proportion to its credit. But, when not narrowly watched, when its emissions exceed the coin it can command, and when, consequently, its permanence depends on the permanence of public credulity, a bank, though it may furnish millions in a minute, while a balance of trade too unfavourable does not occasion a run, must at length prove a dreadful national calamity.

5. Oaths.

5. OATHS. The author reprobates the use of the imprecatory part of oaths, and recommends a substitution of solemn affirmations,

mations, with severe penalties on detected falsehood. At all events he warns the states against

1. A multiplicity of oaths, which renders them too familiar.

2. A slight manner of administering them.

6. THE SLAVE TRADE. Of this inhu-6. The slave man and diabolical traffic he strongly trade. urges the total abolition.

He concludes by expressing his alarm at some accounts just arrived from America, and adds, that, should the states falsify the expectations conceived of them, the fairest experiment ever tried in human affairs will miscarry, and a revolution, which had revived the hopes of good men, will discourage all future attempts for liberty, and only open a new scene of human degeneracy and misery.

THE END OF THE ABSTRACT.

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It conclusively explains the cause of some
accidents, and shows that the cause is not
that, should the matter be the same, it is
connected of them, the cause is not the same
and in human affairs with the cause, and a re-
sult, which had received the power of good
men, will disengage it from the power of
liberty, and only open a new field of human
degeneracy and misery.

THE END OF THE WORLD

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

OBSERVATIONS, &c. of DR. PRICE.

WHAT terrible revolutions in the manners and **PEACE.** constitution of the united states of America must have been in the contemplation of those, who have supposed them threatened with such contests and wars as have converted Europe into a theatre of devastation and murder! Never before had any nation such powerful motives for mutual affection. Never before did such urgent interests strengthen the bonds of fraternity among men. The citizens of each of those states never surely can forget how much they owe to the citizens of all the other states. At every step they cannot but meet some monument of the courage exerted by their friends in defence of liberty. The happiness which they will enjoy must be an eternal pledge of mutual gratitude; and at the distance of a thousand miles from home they must still feel that they are in the bosom of their country.

Whence can the seeds of discord ever be scattered among these nations of brethren? What have they not to conquer from nature, before they can entertain

the absurd desire of gaining new possessions? From the sea, quite beyond the mountains, stretches out an immense territory, which must be covered with cottages, with peasants, and with implements of husbandry; and which compels the Americans to direct the activity of their infant population towards a laudable industry. They have a whole world to people before they can find themselves straitened for room. Such is the preservative which they have received from heaven, and which no people ever possessed before; such, independent of their moderation and virtue, is the security of peace to these happy nations.

CONGRESS. The precautions, however, which the respectable writer of the preceding work points out, are dictated by wisdom. From the august assembly of the continental congress nothing ever can be feared. Its members will always be wisely elected; for a free people never err in the choice of their representatives. The short, the perhaps too short, period of its administration leaves no room for jealousy. The nature of their functions, which are foreign from the internal government of each particular state, forms a sufficient barrier to ambition. They never can conceive the design of usurping the sovereignty, or employing the forces of the confederation against the liberty of any single state.

ITS POW-ERS TO BE ENLARGED Repose confidence, therefore, in the congress, and enlarge its powers. Be judged by the delegates of all your provinces; or in other words, be your own judges,

judges. Nothing will resist the decisions of an impartial justice. Arm, however, your judges with such a power as cannot be dangerous; arm them with your whole strength to enforce their sentences. Thus will your decrees, pronounced by the lips of your judges, be executed by yourselves.

No free man, undoubtedly, will ever think of entrusting mercenaries with the defence of that country, which has been dyed with your blood. The time, thank heaven! is now arrived, when patriotism will cease to be a hatred of human kind; when the prosperity of a free state will cease to be founded on the lust of empire, as it was at Rome, or on the love of war, as was the case at Sparta. But human nature is still the same. Nothing great ever was, or ever will be, achieved without urgent motives, and some degree of enthusiasm. Reason alone, and ideas of order and justice, without the art to convert them into passions, will never keep alive that activity which is essential to liberty. Liberty cannot long survive the moment when it ceases to be the highest and most sensible of enjoyments. In order that it may be preserved, your passion for it must never abate. Enjoyment must never weaken its charms; but every day must revive in your souls that sentiment of intoxication, which you felt at the first shout of victory.

Would you obtain this great effect, address your-EDUCA-
selves to the senses: address them perpetually: place TION.

constantly before the sight, the deplorable scenes of your servitude, and the enchanting picture of your deliverance. Begin with the infant in his cradle: let the first word he lisps be the name of WASHINGTON. Let his first lessons of history be the wrongs which you suffered, and the courage which set you free. Let his daily prayers be expressions of gratitude to God, for raising you up accomplished chiefs; for leading on your armies; and for strengthening the arms of your peasants, against the discipline and the tyranny of Europe. Let the youth, the hope of his country, grow up amidst annual festivals, commemorative of the events of the war, and sacred to the memory of your heroes. Let him learn from his father to weep over the tombs of those heroes, and to bless their virtues. Let his first study be your declaration of independence, and the code of your constitutions, which were sketched out amidst the clashing of arms. Let him stop at the end of the field which he ploughs, and, while the tears start into his eyes, let him read, engraved upon the rude stones; **HERE SAVAGES, IN THE PAY OF DESPOTISM, CAST AN INFIRM OLD MAN INTO THE FLAMES; HERE THEY DASHED AGAINST THE TREES, CHILDREN, SNATCHED FROM THE BREASTS OF THEIR DYING MOTHERS; THERE THE SATELLITES OF OPPRESSION BENT THE KNEE, DEMANDED THEIR LIVES, AND BECAME CAPTIVES.** Let the calendar record, throughout the year, those immortal acts, to which you owe your freedom. Let the sword, which his father once used in the defence of his family,

family, the sword with which he will himself be girt, when he shall attain the age of reason and of strength, be bound to his plough. Let the instrument of war, thus united to the implement of peace, renew that language of signs, which in antient times was employed with such effect for less sacred purposes. Let it tell him, what, having thus learned, he never can forget, that the pride of a free man braves all dangers, but never disturbs the public order: that human blood ought to be lavished for liberty, but ought to flow for no other cause: that war is horrible, if it be unnecessary: that it is the reproach of the mercenary who sells his life for gold, or for the detestable honour of cool barbarity, but that it consigns to immortality the patriot hero, who devotes his life for his brethren.

Intoxicated with the love of liberty, like those ancient Germans, who, in the language of Tacitus, *LIBERTATEM DEPERIBANT, UTPOTE SANGUINE PARTAM*, let this young hero, at frequent intervals, quit the toils of husbandry, to kindle his public spirit amidst warlike exercises; let him learn the use of arms, and accustom himself to discipline in the sight of the most respectable citizens. Let him, in their presence, pledge himself to defend his country and its laws.

Of such men be your troops composed. Leave it *AMILITIA* to the monarchs of Europe to distribute and to class different ranks, and to pay them with riches and
with

with conventional honours . . but with you be every important function united. Let the husbandman be the soldier and the representative of the state; let him contribute his labours, his courage, and his knowledge to the public prosperity; and let him not think that his debt to his country can be discharged by a less tribute than that of his whole existence.

Fear nothing from a militia thus constituted. Be this the strength with which you arm the congress for the execution of its judgments. Be this the barrier which you oppose to the inroads of the barbarians, if your humanity and beneficence cannot gain you their friendship. Be this your safeguard against the attacks of European nations, who then will never venture to interrupt your domestic peace.

But great indeed is the task which remains to be performed After having set the noble example of a philosophical legislation, arising from the midst of carnage, set the still more admirable example of a wise and noble modesty. Revise your laws. Attend to public virtues. Imagine institutions which may perpetuate them. Complete what you have so well begun. Take no rest till you have attained the highest perfection of which human nature is susceptible; nor suffer by your neglect the most auspicious moment for the happiness of the human species to pass unimproved.

THESE

THESE ideas I need not observe belong to the venerable author of the preceding work; I will venture, however, to reject his opinion upon the nature of the various powers with which he thinks the continental congress ought to be invested. It "must be trusted," says he, "with a power of procuring supplies for defraying the expences of the confederation; of contracting debts, and providing funds for discharging them (1)." I am far from concurring in this opinion, and I offer my objections to Dr. Price himself, as a tribute due to his love of truth and of mankind.

THE most fatal deception of what in Europe is **LOANS TO** called **POLITICS**, has been to suppose **CREDIT** useful, **BE AVOID-** and to throw a part of the duties of the present upon **ED.** future generations. This horrible system originates in a want of patriotism; and paves the way for a revolution, which, whether distant or near at hand, is certainly inevitable, and will strike the world with terror. The burthen is continually increasing; the exigencies of every year are aggravated with the weight of all which have gone before. Every loan creates a necessity of future loans; so that the only end of this boasted policy, is to render the public service impossible, or in other words, to dissolve the

(1) See p. 183 ante.

society;

society ; an evil which can be no otherwise avoided, than by a violation of faith, and the general destruction of property . . . Free republicans, guard against the contagion of slavery. Remember, that to become what you ought to be, you must entirely forget what you were.

A true patriot wholly devotes himself to his country. He pays his debt to it every year with joy, suffers no arrears of it to accrue, and never postpones till to-morrow, the duty of to-day. In his own person he performs every service of the state ; whether by seizing, and delivering over to the law, the enemies and disturbers of society ; or by opening and maintaining the communications which are necessary to internal commerce and the public welfare ; or by hearing and deciding all disputes amongst his brethren ; or by resisting the inroads of all hostile invaders, with the same hand with which he directs his plough across the field, his little and his only patrimony. The performance of such services as these depends not on loans, and scarcely even on money, but on personal exertions : and in such services is the generous sentiment of patriotism manifested, nourished, and transmitted to posterity.

Discharge then the debts which you contracted for the noblest of causes, at a crisis which admitted neither of deliberation or delay, but **CONTRACT NO NEW ONES.** Let all that you owe to your country be discharged at the close of every year ; and begin the
new

new year by resuming the same labours, which will again be rewarded with the same enjoyments. Behold with terror yon city, the capital of your ancient empire, loaded with the burden of her paper circulation, her credit, and her bank; yet intoxicated with the splendid phantom of her opulence; and hastening, by her greedy credulity, or by her presumptuous confidence, the arrival of that dreadful moment, when she must start from her long dream... And do you, peaceful, happy, and modestly proud of having vindicated the rights of human nature, shun so sad an example, and demonstrate to the world, how true happiness may be promoted under the auspices of liberty, by moderation, order, and œconomy.

CONTRACT NO DEBTS. The first loan made amongst you, will attest with certainty, the decline of that spirit which ought to animate you. It will be to shift upon others, the task imposed by nature and by your oaths upon yourselves, and to discharge only the twentieth part of your duties. It will be a gross injustice, which will load your posterity with the burden of your services and of their own(2).
It

(2) This is what no person has ventured to say hitherto, except one English writer, who, in a very recent work, of which but few copies have been printed, and which has been given to none but his friends, has pointed out the injustice and illegality of loans. The passage appears to me to be so well written, and so unanswerable, that I could not resist the pleasure of inserting it here.

“ It

It will be a fatal contagion, which speedily destroying your virtues, will awaken avarice, multiply intrigues,

“ It is the birthright of an Englishman not to be
 “ taxed, but by representatives of his own immediate
 “ choice*. If this right had been attended to, all supplies
 “ demanded by government would have been raised within
 “ the year; for the constitutional method of voting supplies
 “ was this—The service being announced from the throne,
 “ the house of commons decided, whether it was more
 “ prudent, and more for the interest of the public and their
 “ constituents, to sustain the expence, or to stop the ser-
 “ vice. But this principle was violated, when the supplies
 “ ceased to be raised within the year, and to be thrown
 “ upon posterity. For, when five millions were the sum
 “ to be raised, and raised within the year, they who im-
 “ posed, sustained the burden. The evil might be sufficient
 “ for the day, but it expired with it; whereas, if five mil-
 “ lions are raised by mortgage, they who grant it, charge
 “ themselves with no more than the simple interest, which
 “ is but £.250,000, whilst they charge both principal and
 “ interest of five millions upon their children and their
 “ children’s children.”

“ *Wt*

“ * The security that an Englishman formerly had against an abuse
 “ of the power of taxation was this,—that the member of parliament
 “ himself, paid his proportionate share of every tax that he consented to
 “ impose; so that he could not injure the property of his electors
 “ without impairing his own. But this security has long been done
 “ away by the effects of influence; and since parliament became so
 “ great a part of the trade of Exchange-alley, we see how the fortunes
 “ of subscribers to public loans are aggrandised, by the very act of
 “ impoverishing their constituents.”

intrigues, and bend the loftiness of your souls to the meanness of stock-jobbing. Your country will soon be

“ *We give and grant* is the language of money bills ;
 “ but it was meant to express the *gift and grant* of their
 “ own property who made the offer, but not the property
 “ of posterity.

“ This violation of the principles of the constitution will
 “ appear in yet stronger colours when you consider, that
 “ the accumulation of the national debt has now brought
 “ the interest alone to ten millions, to be levied *every year*
 “ *within the year* on the inhabitants of Great Britain. But
 “ what had we to do in choosing those men who imposed
 “ this exorbitant rent-charge upon us ? They were the
 “ representatives, some of the last, some of the present
 “ century, but not one of them elected by those on whom
 “ the payment of these taxes falls.

“ It is an unpleasant theme to dwell upon.—But the
 “ deviation from the principles of the constitution, in levy-
 “ ing taxes on posterity, appears to me as a breach of the
 “ duty of a private man, of the citizen, and of the states-
 “ man. For the duty of a private-man (the *pater-familias*)
 “ is to protect, not injure, the inheritance of his children ;
 “ the duty of the citizen is to sacrifice his personal and
 “ temporary interest, to the permanent advantage and fu-
 “ ture welfare of his country. The difference betwixt a
 “ good and a bad statesman consists in this, that the one
 “ provides for the exigencies of the day, the other guards
 “ against events that may endanger public safety in times
 to

forgotten; and the field of honour, the asylum of liberty, will be converted into an exchange of traders.

But should the Americans make no loans in future, for how many ages will they not be incumbered with the burden of their present debt, which must be paid at last; and what credit can they enjoy till this debt shall be discharged?

The

“ to come. It is moreover a duty we owe our sovereign,
 “ not to obstruct his designs for the public good; and, least
 “ of all, to embarrass him in the execution of his first and
 “ greatest charge, that of defending and protecting his
 “ people. But this wretched system of forestalling the
 “ national resources, is if possible more injurious to the
 “ state of the king, than of the subject; for, having the
 “ greatest interest in the preservation of the state, he is most
 “ injured in having the means of defence taken out of his
 “ hands; and under the weight of our present debt, how is
 “ the crown to undertake any measures, even of national
 “ defence, without heaping oppressions on the oppressed,
 “ and without striking deeper at public credit, already
 “ wounded, perhaps beyond cure?

The evil appears to this writer to be so great, that he does not hesitate to say, that “ if the debt be swelled beyond
 “ its present magnitude, he must resort to antiquity for an
 “ expression to describe the situation of Great Britain:
 “ DEUS, ETIAM SI DEUS VOLUIT, SERVARE REM-
 “ PUBLICAM NON POTEST.” *Political letters, written*
in March and April, 1784. London: printed by William
Richardson in the Strand. Letter X. p. 54 and 55.

THE actual debt of the united states is computed **CREDIT** to amount to nine millions sterling. This they un- **UNNECES-** doubtedly must pay; not in order to gain credit **SARY.** hereafter, which, even were the resolution of never making loans not enrolled amongst their fundamental laws, would be to them a most fatal advantage, but because justice requires it; and justice is the first of virtues; and the new republic is lost, if she cease to adore virtue.

To speak without reserve. I cannot approve the arithmetical spirit which reigns throughout the chapter upon public debts. One reads of nothing but of millions, and of the means of increasing them; of growing interest; of a produce, which in a few years doubles its capital, triples it, multiplies it to a degree which I had rather admit without investigation, than pore over the disgusting calculation Why this dazzling display of gold before the eyes of the sons of freedom, and the cultivators of a land favoured by heaven? What avail the means, whether real or imaginary, of becoming rich and corrupted, where the only object to be pursued, is to establish the reign of virtue and happiness? Your debt, my friends, amounts to nine millions. Pay it quietly, gradually, without any extraordinary effort, by judicious contributions levied upon the land-owners; deny yourselves, for a time, some of the comforts of life. That sacrifice will be the price of your liberty: can it then be burthensome to your brave and generous minds? Let every public service be discharged by
your-

yourself; let the contribution diminish in proportion as the debt is discharged; and let the funds which the confederation will no longer stand in need of, be applied in the cultivation of your fruitful soil, which will pour into your hands those pure treasures, for which you will have only providence to thank.

It is, alas, next to impossible, for the most just and enlightened understandings, to keep entirely clear of the prejudices which surround them. It is from England that you are addressed; it is from England that you are advised to establish a permanent credit, and to form a continental patrimony for the united states.

CREDIT ! . . . It is a worm which gnaws the vitals of the state. The wisdom of man, be assured, is to distrust himself. Were the time ever to arrive when your zeal should abate; when private interest should weigh down the public weal; when every man should prize his own fortune above the state; the habit of making loans would then be confirmed; you would borrow instead of acting; you would convert the services of free citizens into the services of mercenaries; and that extremity of the world, on which the hopes of all the rest of mankind repose, would become a dishonoured country; whose example would furnish tyrants with one principle more, on which to justify their oppression of the human species,

You

You have to begin every thing anew. Adopt nothing from declining states, which, by prejudices, revolutions, and habits, are diseased beyond all cure. Their most deplorable ignorance is that of the evils which beset them. Their most mortal disease is the blindness of their inveterate passions, which lose the very desire of being cured. The principle of those evils which threaten the child at the moment of its birth, escapes the keenest eye, but it carries in it contagion and death. It is the same with states. In the first false idea, in the first unjust principle which is blended in their infant constitution, exists the source of their misfortunes and their ruin: and this evil is the more dangerous, because the fermentation of it will be slow, and difficult to foresee. The smallest leaven of vice or error is sufficient to set, unperceived, the manners and laws at variance, and to effect the dissolution of republics, in appearance the best constituted.

All states at present confound money and riches, riches and happiness, splendor and power, fame and true glory. Shun these errors, and sow not the seeds of them in your republics. Know, and be it ever remembered amongst you, that moderation alone can render you happy, numbers and courage powerful, and virtue truly glorious. Be this then your constant rule of conduct. Every thing which may corrupt your manners, damp your zeal, and divert you from your duties as men, and as citizens, is a mighty evil, which, dangerous already, will become, in process of time, an infallible source of destruction to your nation.

Loans are a complication of all these disorders. Be it then an invariable law with you, never to borrow.

NO CONTI-
NENTAL DO-
MAINS IN
THE HANDS
OF CONGRESS

Our author has another idea, which could take birth no where but in the midst of those prejudices which infest the old-age of empires. He advises you to form a continental domain in the hands of the congress; and by this precaution, to prepare the way for the time when you will no longer have to render any services to your country; even were the calculations of this political arithmetic just, that would alone be a reason to reject the result of them. Frame your constitutions rather in such a manner that your country may always need the assistance of its sons, and your citizens the protection of their common-parent. To the sentiment of this reciprocal dependence, providence has united the finest emotions in nature, and man cannot but err unless he imitate this noble order. Can you be ignorant that the pursuit of means to support the public weal, independent of public patriotism, takes its rise from a vague sentiment which supposes that happiness can be found in idleness, sloth, and personal interest? Will not such an institution necessarily encourage and promote those dispositions of mind which first suggested it? and if those dispositions be the most fatal poison of a free state, what are we to think of the establishments which have such a tendency?

Public domains have ever been the engines by which the distant servitude of nations has been prepared by their

their chiefs. And shall they be the first institution of a free people? Public domains entrusted perpetually to the administration of the representatives of your states! What are they but a power, independent of your will, committed to those, whose sole function is to express your will by public statutes? and to what purpose? In order to release you from your duties!.... With one blow you would strike at public virtue and at liberty. The same institution would render you corrupt and indifferent about the public, and deliver up your posterity to servitude. This single law would destroy all which it is incumbent on you to defend. The least misfortune which could then befall you, would be for the deputies of your provinces to become more indifferent about the public good, than ambitious. If, considering the possessions entrusted to them as public property, they neglect the cultivation of them, you abandon to sterility the lands which providence has enjoined you to improve: or, if treating this property as their own, they render it fertile, you condemn your children to be slaves; in all events you stifle patriotism and liberty in their very birth.

Never enrich the men whom you would preserve incorrupt. The contagion of gold is dangerous to the purest minds; and the boasted grandeur of modern nations is nothing but the power of bribery over baseness..... Free republicans! if you cherish in your hearts any other desires than those of an extensive cultivation, of wide population, and of that happiness, which fathers, mothers, children, brethren, and citi-

zens enjoy in the innocence of nature, in the warmth of affection, and in the bosom of their country, you have not deserved the love and admiration which you have inspired, you will deceive the hopes of mankind: you will become what we are—nothing, nay, worse than nothing; for it were better not to exist, than to be vicious and miserable.

COMMERCE But what ray of celestial light has pierced through the darkness which surrounds us, and inspired the virtuous writer with the wise sentiments which he entertains upon commerce! What praise does he not deserve for having seen and felt, amid the delusions of wealth, and the calculations of avarice, that external commerce must ruin your states! How warm must have been his love of liberty and of virtue; to overcome those prejudices, which, in his country, attach an idea of grandeur and of force to mercantile speculation! Read this chapter again and again. Engrave it in your public halls, on tables of marble, and of brass. Or rather engrave it on tables of gold. It may make a more lively impression on your minds, when you see that corrupting metal, which has undone mankind, serving for once the cause of wisdom and truth, and recording the condemnation of that avarice which itself enflames.

Commerce, considered as the means of uniting men, and connecting them together, is ordained by nature. It increases that fraternal affection for one's fellow creatures, which every ingenuous mind feels to be

be irresistible. That men, connected together by obeying the same laws, sharing the same government, and inhabiting the same country, should make mutual exchanges of services, and of industry; that, in a more extensive confederation, they should establish some representative sign of these mutual exchanges, is perfectly natural and beneficial to mankind; but when once commerce exceeds those limits, it becomes dangerous and pernicious to every nation to which it is not necessary.

Commerce, considered as a means of living at the cost of foreign nations, is necessary to the people who inhabit countries which do not afford them a subsistence. The miracles of industry which such a situation has produced, are so bewitching, that they have deceived all Europe; and deceived it to such a degree, as to make this speculating activity be mistaken for the true source of prosperity to every nation. A capital and a fatal error, which has confounded what is only astonishing with what is useful! and has obscured this important truth, that the very same resources which are necessary to nations labouring under natural disadvantages, are the scourges of those societies, which are favoured by nature!

Would you estimate foreign commerce truly? Consider first what is of essential benefit to human societies.

Liberty, personal safety, population, virtue, and courage, are of essential benefit to them. Every

thing beyond these is indifferent; every thing destructive of these is prejudicial.

The principle of an active foreign commerce is the love of riches. Such a commerce is, therefore, injurious to morality. The love of riches never dwelt long in the same breast with enthusiasm; consequently it must weaken, and soon extinguish all sentiments of liberty and of courage. The merchant, whose soul is contracted by calculations, and whose heart is consumed with desires, considers honesty as a necessary, rather than as an amiable quality. Virtue, like every thing else, becomes the subject of speculation. From that moment, adieu to morality, adieu to patriotism, adieu to public spirit. What attachment can ever bind inseparably to his country the man, who can transport, in his manual art, or in bills of exchange, his whole property to some other country, and enjoy it there in peace? What is the state to him any further, than as it protects him in the acquisition of his fortune? His desires, far from uniting him with the public, separate him from it, and render him a solitary being, intent upon nothing but his own private good.

Such are the moral consequences of a thirst after commerce. Let us now see what is its physical influence.

If you pay the foreign trader as much as you sell him in industry, to what purpose those exertions, which only multiply unprofitable enjoyment, and without

without adding any thing to your happiness, accelerate your corruption? If your exports be greater than your imports, then you will doubtless be convinced that you are in the road to prosperity; and then you will in fact be hastening to your destruction. Streams of gold will pour in upon you from every quarter. The most crafty, and still more the most rapacious, will seize upon this wealth. Poverty will become the portion of the virtuous and modest, whose fortunes, un-augmented in this prosperity, will bear no proportion to the increased prices of provisions. Inequality of fortune, the fatal source of all misery and of all guilt, the poison of all liberty and of all virtue, will desolate your states. Opulence will be power. Poverty will be abandoned to scorn and oppression. All services will become mercenary. Avarice will spread its infection through every part of the state. Every magistrate will become venal; every law will have its price; every honour will be put up to sale; and, as a just punishment for these false speculations of the basest passions, even commerce will at last prey upon and destroy itself. The treasures which it will have produced, will have raised the price of industry so high, that all competition with other nations will be impossible. Your markets will be forsaken, your ports abandoned, and, ignorant alike how to employ your gold, and how to get rid of it, your nations, ruined by the very excess of their imaginary riches, will lose their commerce without recovering that innocence and happiness which they will have sacrificed to their idol. Your hands will then be stretched

stretched out to receive the chains of the first ambitious usurper who thinks fit to enslave you, and your treasures will become the prize of the first robber who pleases to make them his own.

Such has ever been the fortune of commercial nations.

Judge now of modern politics. Judge of the senseless pride of our calculating philosophers, who dare to despise ancient legislations, and who prefer their own barren arithmetic to the language of the most affecting wisdom. See to what they lead us. See what has been the fate of those nations who have followed these deceitful guides. But for her admirable constitution, your antient parent country would not at this moment exist. That constitution fights the battles of England better than her armies: but yet, did not the sea guard her island; could civil liberty be once violated amongst her sons with impunity: were not morality and domestic order amongst them still preserved untainted by their separation from the continent; had you not rendered them the service of checking their pride, think what would have become of the remains of their liberty, and their power, in the midst of a tumult of factions, an excessive inequality of fortune, a venality of parties, the disorders of bankruptcies, the fluctuations of credit, the terrors of avarice, an excessive load of taxes of every denomination and of every kind, their enormous national debts, and the oppression, which even industry suffers,

suffers, by being crushed under a load of riches amassed during so many years ! You will owe every thing that you have valuable to England. Her injustice has given you liberty ; let her errors teach you lessons of wisdom.

Do I then advise you to pass laws against com-^{NO PROHIBI-}
merce ? to establish prohibitions, and to prescribe any^{ITIONS.}
description of occupations or of labour ? . . . God
forbid ! Liberty and property, those sacred and in-
alienable rights, are the basis of your constitution.
Be careful never to shake them. Forbid nothing but
what is criminal, but encourage nothing but what
is good. This is the sum of all my admonitions.
Let all your laws tend to an equality of fortune. Let
the father's estate, distributed amongst all his children,
multiply citizens, and bring all families to one level.
Let the immense territory which is at your disposal be
portioned out to whoever has the means of cultivat-
ing it. Give it gratuitously. Never sell it. Never
persuade yourselves that you have a right to sell those
countries covered with primitive forests, which belong
only to nature, and over which labour alone can con-
fer a title. Encourage, comfort, aid, and protect,
with all the power of government, the planters, who
purchase the happiness of living amongst you with the
fertilizing sweat of their brows. The commerce
which is truly profitable, is the importation of the
poor and the industrious, from every quarter of the
globe. Grant the right of being represented in the
national assemblies, to every proprietor of a certain
extent

extent of land, ascertained by law. Remember that no man is more than a single individual; that he has but one soul, and can profit the state only by his single faculties. Never, therefore, consider the rich more than the poor. If a hundred acres give a right of suffrage, let a hundred thousand give no more. By this apparent inequality, which is in fact only a more strict and considerate justice, you will impress upon the infancy of your societies, the visible token of that same spirit which presided over their birth. You will take from avarice its strongest incentives, ambition and power. You will transmit to succeeding generations your own disregard of riches. . . . Thus are the virtues of nations formed, by directing their ideas in a certain channel, from which they cannot afterwards deviate.

Leave the merchant, who erects warehouses, builds vessels, and pursues his speculations, to prefer, if he will, the dull arithmetic of his counting-house, to the enchanting prospect of nature—to the affecting luxuriance of the country. . . . Let his property be as sacred as that of any other man: let his liberty be inviolable under the empire of law. But he is only an inhabitant, and not a citizen of your nation. He has chosen to belong to no country, but the world at large. He may, when he pleases, have a country. He may convert his personal property into land; and this change, the most favourable to the spirit of your government, and to the manners of your people, will be the highest ambition of all your inhabitants. Thus, without force, without restraint, without laws, without prohibitions,
and

and without injustice, you will ensure pre-eminence to the innocent, and fraternal art of agriculture, to that art which doubles population, encourages virtue, nourishes the lofty spirit of free minds, supplies the state with defenders, counsellors, and domestic arbitrators, and (since riches must be ever in view,) produces that substantial wealth, which may multiply without engendering luxury and corruption.

Scorn the pitiful and iniquitous shifts which commercial states have practised to prevent the importation of foreign commodities. Here again I venture to combat the opinion of your venerable friend. Concern yourself neither about the protection, nor about the prevention, or the regulation of commerce. Take no thought about trade, but entirely overlook it. If it be advantageous, it should be left free, because liberty alone can make it thrive. If on the other hand it be pernicious, let it still be free, because the infringement of liberty is a greater evil than the existence of abuses. Because it is absurd to think of carrying on commerce with foreign nations, by permitting them to buy your commodities, and at the same time refusing to take theirs in exchange; for in that case they will certainly never deal with you. Because, in short, amidst all the everlasting contests of self-interest, which finds itself embarrassed with its own rules, there is only one fixed principle, that of morality: and morality requires that every man's property should be at his own free disposal. The only just and reasonable maxim to be adopted, therefore, is, to
derive

derive every possible advantage from your own country, to limit the wants of nature by plenty, and those of luxury by moderation.

**THE CON-
STITUTIONS**

The excellent writer, whose work has given rise to these reflections, has said little about your constitutions; but he has communicated to you the short, but invaluable observations of a true philosopher. All that was necessary to be said about them is contained in the letter of the immortal Turgot. In framing your constitutions, the form of the English government has too frequently occurred to your remembrance. What is well adapted to England, is ill calculated for America. Let there be no balance of powers—no complicated constitutions. Are your removeable governors kings? Are your executive councils peers? Have you, or can you have any other representatives than assemblies of citizens, equal by nature and by law? Assemblies which are not *the commons* (as patrician insolence has styled them) but **THE NATION**. Ill betide those corrupted nations, among whom the master-piece of the human intellect has been to create a phantom of peace by means of discord, and to excite a contest of the passions in order to obtain their equilibrium! Deem more nobly of yourselves. Pursue the direct path to wisdom. Let public virtue be your object, and think not of counter-acting the interests of one body of men by those of another. Begin not as others have ended; and poison not the innocent simplicity of your infancy by the subtleties of depraved manhood.

Not

Nor let me be told that you spring from ancient nations, and are not in that state of infancy which I imagine.

Individuals amongst you may be old, but your nation is still young. You have experienced revolutions, which ought to have given new birth to every man amongst you. Are you not in another climate beyond the limits of the ocean? Are not your customs different from those of your former country? Have you not been engaged in war, and little less than civil war? Which of you has not passed the ordeal trial of misery and danger? Which of you has not shed his blood in the noble cause of freedom? Which of you has not to bewail the death of a father, a wife, a child, or a friend, sacrificed in the arduous contest? Be assured that you are beings of no antiquated or vulgar race. You retain of the old world nothing but its knowledge, and the virtues of the new world are all your own.

No reformation, I venture to persuade myself, is necessary in your manners; but nothing should be neglected to preserve their purity. Forget not the force of education. Your excellent friend knew its influence, and treats of it at length: but though every thing he has said upon it be judicious, he has by no means exhausted the subject. Remember that the education of youth consists less in admonishing them, than in the examples and objects with which they are surrounded; and that almost all the misfortunes of
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our ancient empires, arise from the contrast between the precepts instilled into the infant, and the examples placed before the youth. But with you the characters of the parent and the child, of the young and the old, ought to correspond in every respect. The plan of education which I have described at the beginning of these reflections, was not meant as a vain declamation or an unmeaning rhapsody. What I have painted with all the warmth of a soul glowing with zeal for your happiness, it behoves you to execute by the force of your institutions. Multiply your monuments, rites, and commemorative ceremonies. Already you have given reason all the weight of authority, by consecrating the rights of mankind into positive laws. Amongst you, those eternal truths, those noble principles, are no longer subjects of dispute, but ordinances of the legislature. At the very outset of your career, you have taken a giant's stride towards the improvement of the human species, and towards strengthening the monument erected by your hands: go on and complete your work. Form by instruction, and still more create by example, and by the only efficacious and permanent impression, that of external signs, a generation, worthy the epoch of your revolution; a race of men, which constantly growing up in the principles of wisdom, will love justice and moderation, detest ambition and war, those scourges of mankind, and at length display to the world, the union, hitherto so uncommon, of knowledge with virtue,

virtue, and of peace with liberty. Let tyrants tremble at the very name of your happy regions ! Let the oppressed ever find an asylum there ! and may some gleam of happiness be reflected from your coasts, which may at least alleviate the misfortunes of the old' world !



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DETACHED NOTES

U P O N

DR. PRICE'S WORK.

I.

"WHO, even at the beginning of this century, would have thought, that in a few years they would acquire the power of subjecting to their wills the dreadful force of lightning, and of flying in aërostatic machines?"
See p. 178.

Dr. Price in this, as well as in many other instances in the course of this work, rises above the prejudices of his countrymen. Being, like him, well persuaded that the invention of aërostatic machines will very considerably augment the power of mankind, and will, perhaps, at some time or other, totally change the face of human affairs (1); it is with

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equal

(1) It would not be difficult, for instance, to prove, that aërostatic machines may, even before they be at all improved, have considerable influence in war, both by land and sea. Perhaps that horrid insatiation called war will never cease, till the art of destruction be carried to its highest perfection.

equal surprise and concern, that I have observed the English nation, which is so distinguished for every species of merit and of knowledge, passing from the most absurd incredulity, and the most unaccountable indifference about this admirable discovery, to an unexampled enthusiasm for the most ignorant pretenders to science: while the public curiosity has never been awakened to the progress of the art. A discovery which the most respectable of the learned in France, and even in England, have thought deserving of their profoundest meditations, has been disgraced at London by a sordid love of gain (2). The dress, the ridiculous apparatus, the imposing fopperies of the men who first in England exhibited the spectacle of this aerial navigation, were followed by crowds of admirers (3), while, perhaps, in all the three kingdoms,

(2) *Vide infra*, in the note by the Duke de Chaulnes, an account of Dr. Priestley's fine experiment.

(3) Who could have believed, that the dog and the cat, which accompanied Signor Lunardi in his aerial voyage, would have attracted the curiosity of all London and Westminster, and would have drawn from them a tribute of more than four thousand pounds? Who could have believed, that persons of distinction would have prided themselves upon having been able to touch Signor Lunardi's coat at the Pantheon? Who could have believed, that that honest Italian, for having mounted in a balloon, clumsily made, and unskillfully filled—in a balloon, which was advertised to carry two persons, but would only raise himself, and which would not even have raised *him*, if it had weighed ten pounds

doms, there have not been sold five and twenty copies of the reports of the academy of sciences of Paris, and of the other mémoires, which ascertain the discovery, and the very rapid progress of this new invention. Indeed the English, with the exception of a very small number of men of science, and of men superior to national prejudices, are not at all desirous to hear any information on the subject (4).

Q 2

Perhaps

pounds more than it did, since he was obliged to change his gallery and to throw out all his ballast before it would ascend; who could have believed, that that honest Italian would have received higher honours than ever were paid to Capt. Cook? Who could have believed that the Sieur Blanchard, who, according to his judicious custom, did not fail to advertise, that he would display evolutions and manœuvres, and to call for the concurrence of vessels of all nations to ensure his passage to the continent (which is a very easy enterprise, and ought to have been executed long ago, by those who consider balloons only as a means of getting money), who could have believed that the Sieur Blanchard, who did not perform any one thing that he had promised, would have been able to balance the idolatry paid to honest Lunardi, whose ENGLISH BALLOON had nevertheless the advantage of having been the first in time, and of having an auspicious and popular name? Who could have believed—but indeed I have not the most distant intention of diminishing the glory of these illustrious aeronauts: I could only wish, that less attention were paid to them, and more to the perfection of the art.

(4) The name of M. Meunier is hardly known in England. See an account of his experiment in the note of the Duke de Chaulnes.

Perhaps the prejudices, which the English have conceived against these discoveries, may be accounted for, by considering in what contempt the sensible part of the nation hold that rage, which, for a year past, has converted into an ostentatious and childish spectacle, a discovery, which ought to have been matured in silence, and which cannot be any further improved but by experiments, that cannot be made in the presence of an impatient multitude. But, if this be the cause of those prejudices, I will venture to say that they are not, on that account, the less irrational: for that rage, which is in truth very contemptible, is nothing more than a metamorphosis of avarice; and only furnishes an additional reason to dispossess that passion of so noble a field, and to restore it to science, and true philanthropy; an enterprise in which all learned men ought to concur. I intended to have written some observations upon this subject, when the Duke de Chaulnes furnished me with the note, which I have subjoined. He has treated the subject with that precision and clearness, which distinguish all the memoirs that he has written upon different parts of the natural sciences. I thought that men of sense, who are not very well versed in natural philosophy, might derive from this note a clear and adequate idea of the theory of ærostatic machines, sufficient, at least, to convince them of their importance. One cannot too earnestly exhort the English, by their glory and their humanity, the interests of which they will at some time or other, no doubt, prefer to those of their national pretensions, — one cannot too earnestly exhort them to apply themselves

selves to the perfecting of an admirable art, the theory of which is in some degree their own, since it is to the chymists of England that we principally owe the most curious experiments upon the different kinds of air: and even were it otherwise, is not every useful discovery the noblest conquest of mankind, whatever be the country in which it has been made?

An Englishman has declared, that he would have given half his fortune that air balloons had not been discovered by a Frenchman; and that he would have given his whole fortune, that the discovery had been made by an Englishman:—a declaration which bespeaks neither magnanimity nor wisdom; and which, were it the sentiment of the nation, and not the expression of an illiberal individual, would afford matter of humiliation indeed, but not to the French. I know several of that nation, who regret that the discovery was not made by an Englishman, because then the enthusiasm of a people of strong passions, of great perseverance, and possessed of invaluable means of improvement, would have hastened the perfection of this unforeseen, and, spite of what envy may say, this noble and important discovery.

Seven years ago, a writer of considerable name in Europe, was pleased to express himself precisely in these words.

“ The art of flying through the air, notwithstanding the chimeras which have been lately

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“ published

“ published (5) upon the means of realizing it, will
 “ never be discovered. Neither individuals, nor vehicles,
 “ will ever float across the atmosphere. The physical
 “ IMPOSSIBILITY OF THESE PROJECTS IS DEMON-
 “ STRATED. But were they possible, the execution of
 “ such a design would be very pernicious. Men do
 “ but too much mischief to one another already, in
 “ their progresses over the globe, both on foot and in
 “ carriages. What then might we not apprehend, if
 “ the air were seen darkened with battalions, who,
 “ sailing in clouds, would fall with the impetuosity
 “ of a tempest upon regions, which no precautions
 “ could have secured against such an invasion! A
 “ similar revolution would take place in society, if
 “ men could become invisible, pass rapidly across the
 “ widest space, and penetrate into the places the most
 “ strongly secured. But it is to be hoped that this will
 “ never be performed, but in fairy tales (6).”

It is unnecessary, I believe, to point out the ab-
 surdity of this emphatical nonsense, which, one would
 think,

(5) This is an allusion, without doubt, to the adver-
 tisements of the Sieur Blanchard and his compeers, the
 pretended mechanics, who, several years ago, were sure
 that they could fly through the air, were they once pos-
 sessed of the means of raising themselves; and who have
 forgot these declarations now, that they are in possession
 of those means:

(6) Extracted from a memoir of Mr. Formey upon the
 question, “whether all truths ought to be made public?”

Mém.

think, had been the text of the superficial and decisive geniuses, who as well in England as in France, and in many other parts of Europe, have affected, for several months past, to speak with contempt, or with apprehensions, of one of the greatest discoveries ever made by man. Every sensible person must easily perceive, that all the objections which can be made against the aërostatic machine, might have been urged, with equal force, against the discovery of fire, of ploughs, of ladders, of matches, in a word, against the invention of all the conveniences, and even of all the necessaries of life. But let it be frequently repeated, as an eternal lesson to presumptuous men, and to those who detract from every thing great, that in the year 1777, it was printed among the memoirs of the academy of

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Berlin,

Mém. de l'acad. de Berlin, pour 1777, p. 138.—See too the *Annales civiles, politiques & littéraires. Genève, année 1782, No. 22. article POMPES HYDRAULIQUES EN SERVICE ACTUEL*, which is, if possible, still more absurd than the passage from M. Formey. It is remarkable enough, that this article in the *Annales*, where ridicule is so clumsily thrown upon the aërostatic art, the secret of which is there said to have been lost ever since the days of ancient Icarus, of discouraging memory, was printed a few weeks before the memoirs, in which M. Montgolfier demonstrated his noble discovery. And this is the more remarkable, as it is certainly impossible not to esteem the author of that periodical publication, at least for his talents and his information,

Berlin, that the physical impossibility of any man, or any vehicles, sailing across the atmosphere, was demonstrated; and that such a voyage would never be performed but in fairy tales.

Thus do we find a philosopher, only five years before the invention of the aërostatic machine, declaring that the invention was both pernicious and impossible!

When will philosophers have the courage to deliberate and to doubt? When will men be convinced, that, if heaven had refused them the few thinkers who have instructed them, it would be matter of doubt whether the human species were entitled to any pre-eminence over ourang-outangs; and that it is, therefore, a sacrilegious madness to depreciate the efforts of genius? When will nations learn, that every successful effort of the human intellect deserves the favour, the respect, and the gratitude of all the world? —But let us hear the Duc de Chaulnes.

ON AËROSTATIC BALLOONS.

To speak intelligibly upon any new subject, it is necessary to begin with a detail of the principal facts which have attended its discovery.

The aërostatic art was incontestibly discovered by M. de Montgolfier. He was the first who raised large machines by rarefying the air contained in them: this process produces air which is lighter than atmospheric air, nearly in the ratio of 2 to 1.

M. Charles

M. Charles had already raised and burst soap-bubbles filled with inflammable air, according to the process of M. Cavallo. The specific gravity of this air, made from the vitriolic acid, and iron, and generated only in small quantities in the laboratories, is, to that of the external air, as 1 to 10. When made in large quantities, it is nearly as 1 to 6; and by particular processes it may be obtained in the ratio of 1 to 17: consequently, there was a very great advantage in employing inflammable air for the purpose of raising balloons.

After the discovery of M. de Montgolfier, M. Charles entertained the idea of using this air. Mess. Roberts, two brothers, who live in the same house with him, and who understand the mechanical part perfectly well, constructed the first balloon that was sent off from the Thuilleries, and in which Mess. Charles and Roberts travelled.

Mess. Roberts have since constructed by themselves, at St. Cloud, the balloon of 52 feet in length, by 30, which belongs to the Duke de Chartres; and that of 44 feet by 26, cylindrical as the former, in which they ascended in September last.

The filling of balloons with inflammable air, produced from the vitriolic acid, being very expensive, Dr. Priestley has just discovered a process, attended with little expence, and which resembles much that which is adopted by M. Lavoisier, to generate this air. The French chymist makes the steam of boiling
water

water pass through the barrel of a gun, kept red-hot by burning coals. Instead of the gun barrel, Dr. Priestley uses a tube of red-hot brass, upon which the steam of water has no effect, and which he fills with the pieces of iron which are separated in the boring of cannon. By this method he obtains an inflammable air, the specific gravity of which is, to that of the common air, as 1 to 13. Dr. Priestley, in a manner equally honourable and unusual, was candid enough to mention what had been done before him in France upon this subject.

At length, M. Meunier, a young officer of much information, who has succeeded M. d'Alembert, member of the academy of sciences, has just published the most learned, the most ingenious, the clearest, and in a word, the most important essay upon the manner of raising balloons, without the loss of ballast, or of inflammable air, the former of which it is impossible, and the latter it is very difficult, to supply in the air. In his balloon, he incloses a smaller, filled with common air, which is of course compressed by the dilatation of the inflammable air, in proportion as it rises in laminæ of air, which are becoming gradually less dense than itself. This compression diminishes the quantity of atmospheric air in the little balloon as it rises, and consequently lessens its weight. If it be necessary to supply this loss, it is easily done by a pair of bellows fixed in the gallery. At the conclusion of this ingenious contrivance, M. Meunier gives a table, calculated with much accu-

racy,

racy, of the different degrees of the specific gravity of the air, at the progressive altitudes to which the loss of equilibrium makes the balloon ascend. In reading this excellent essay, we cannot but feel a satisfaction in learning that M. Meunier is one of the commissioners appointed by the academy of sciences at Paris, to improve the aërostatic art; and at the same time, we cannot observe without regret, that the name of M. Meunier is scarcely known in England.

There are, therefore, at present, two methods employed for raising balloons.

One by rarefying the air. This method diminishes the weight only in the ratio of 2 to 1; and consequently requires a balloon of a much larger size: but the rarefaction of the air may be kept up by materials of little expence, and readily procured. It is no difficult matter to avoid setting the balloons, thus filled, on fire; an accident which has hitherto too frequently happened,

The other method is by inflammable air, which is attended with great advantages. It has hitherto been very expensive; but it will become much less so, by the process of the iron chippings, and the steam of water, than by that of the vitriolic acid; the materials are cheap, and furnish a great quantity of air, in proportion to their weight and to their bulk. The size of the balloons therefore, and consequently the quantity of the expensive materials of which they are made, is considerably diminished: for the diminution of weight, obtained

tained by rarefying the air, is only as 2 to 1, and by the common gaz, as 6 to 1; while in this process, it is declared by Dr. Priestley, to be as 13 to 1; besides, by adopting, with Mess. Roberts, the cylindrical form by which the capacity of the machine is doubled, without increasing the resistance, great advantages are gained, especially with respect to the possibility of directing it; so that it is probable, that with balloons of 30 feet in height, by 15, or 19 in diameter, the same weight can be raised, as Mess. Roberts took up in their last voyage. This weight is from about 800, to 1000 pounds, besides the weight of the globe itself.

We cannot state any facts so satisfactory as these, respecting the modes of directing balloons. It is to be feared, that we shall for a long time be impeded by the grand obstacle, the resistance, which the balloons experience, by reason of their large surface. We have not in air as in water, the resource of a fixed point of action upon a fluid, which also has much more resistance than air. It is therefore difficult in a long voyage, to rely upon the continued efforts of the small number of persons the balloon can carry up; and the number of whom cannot be increased, without increasing the bulk of the machine. It is true that the resistance of its surface, which is that of the great circle of the sphere, does not increase in proportion to its solidity, and consequently not in proportion to the force required by its size to subdue the equilibrium. But we have as yet nothing sufficiently accurate upon this point, to induce us to add any considerable increase to the bulk of the balloon, in the
ratio

ratio of which bulk alone, more men might be carried up, or more mechanical means of overcoming the resistance of a given current of air required.

It is, however, certain, from the observations already made, that at different heights, different currents of air exist, and sometimes in opposite directions; and upon this circumstance alone, is founded the only hope of directing these machines, that has yet presented itself. Now, as we are at present able to ascend, or descend at pleasure, perhaps it may be found possible to go in search of these currents: perhaps too, an attention to the means by which birds fly against the wind, added to observations of comparative anatomy upon fish and birds (7), which surmount the currents of the two fluids that are common to us and them, may possibly suggest new ideas, with respect to the direction of ærostatic machines.

Time alone, and numerous experiments, can bring these reflections to maturity, and realize these expectations. Experiments, therefore, cannot be too much encouraged, nor too frequently made.

But, exclusive of the circumstance of directing air balloons, the greatest, and perhaps the only improvement which remains to be made in the ærostatic art, though dis-

(7) M. Tenon has already given a learned essay upon this subject, to the academy of sciences at Paris.

discovered only about a twelvemonth ago, it still presents us, even in its present state, with numerous advantages. Observatories and laboratories may be had in the most elevated situations, adapted to all circumstances; few of which require a degree of elevation, difficult to be attained. The experiments of natural philosophy, and of chymistry, which have already been made, may be repeated in all regions, and at all altitudes; many new ones may be tried, particularly upon electricity, and upon the causes of the direction and variation of the magnetic needle: in a word, the several degrees of rarefaction, and temperature, indicated by the barometer, and by the thermometer, may be ascertained throughout the atmosphere. All the natural sciences have therefore acquired a great additional advantage. The art of war is already changed. By means of balloons we may become exactly acquainted with all the manœuvres of the enemy. Fleets can no more be separated by a storm, if every vessel send off from the bottom of its mast a balloon, carrying up a person to make observations with a telescope. Intelligence may be conveyed into a place that is besieged. Geography and astronomy may perhaps derive still greater advantages from aërostatic machines. It may hereafter be possible to ascend with ease to heights which have hitherto been inaccessible by every known method. We may be able, as it were, to copy with an absolute certainty, geographical plans and charts, which have hitherto been only unfaithful directors. We may now, with the greatest facility and security, extend our views behind inaccessible objects,

jects, of which we could before have only false, or at least, dubious accounts. In a word, we shall enjoy all the advantages which can result from a vertical survey of all objects, from any altitude we wish.

Balloons have hitherto been almost the exclusive property of mountebanks, who have concealed, as much as possible, every thing which could render the experiment easy to be repeated, and consequently to be improved. Most of them, guided only by the eager desire of gain, and almost entirely ignorant of the subject, have devoted themselves to a speculation merely lucrative; and have had no other view than to exhibit their balloons, and even the animals that had gone up in them, in large rooms, at a shilling a head, as if we did not know that a dog, or a cat, can breathe in the same air as a man.

On the other hand, while aërostatic experiments have been repeated in almost every part of the globe, they seem in England to have only awakened national animosity and jealousy: and the honour of having first raised a balloon in England was given to a foreigner, only upon condition, as it should *seem*, that he were not a Frenchman.

I have often heard persons in London boast, with as little sense as philosophy, of their indifference about balloons; and, even among the learned, there seems to have been a kind of confederacy, to disregard the most curious experiment that ever was made, the discovery

covery of which accident had placed upon the territory of France.

II.

“THE majority of the British house of commons is
 “ chosen by a few thousands of the dregs of the people, who
 “ are constantly paid for their votes.—Is it not ridi-
 “ culous to call a country so governed free?” See note,
 p. 187.

I have heard this note charged with exaggeration. A short, but accurate review of the manner, in which the people of Great-Britain are represented in parliament, will be sufficient to justify Dr. Price, and to give a clear idea of the question: for though foreigners are perpetually asserting, that the English are not properly represented, few, I believe, are able to point out the defects of their representation.

With respect to England, I shall state the facts mentioned by Mr. Burgh (8), as the result of Mr. Brown Willis's calculations, the truth of which has never been questioned. As to Scotland, which is still more unequally represented than England, I take
 my

(8) *Political disquisitions; or an enquiry into public errors, defects, and abuses.* Vol. I. ch. iv. p. 39. & seq.

my facts from the *Letters of Zeno* (9), which are allowed to be perfectly accurate.

In England, the voice of a majority is considered as the voice of the whole number of electors. For example, where a town has ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY voters, SEVENTY-SIX constitute a majority; in the same manner as in parliament, TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY votes have as much force as FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHT, and give a bill the sanction of a law.

This, at the outset, is certainly an inconvenience: but it is nothing in comparison to the excessive disproportion between the rights of election of the towns and boroughs, which are represented in parliament (10). For instance:

GRAMPOUND sends two representatives, who are chosen by a majority consisting of FIVE votes; the right of election residing in a corporation composed of NINE members.

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(9) *Letters of Zeno, addressed to the citizens of Edinburgh, on parliamentary representation; and particularly on the imperfect representation for the city of Edinburgh, and the other burghs of Scotland.*—Edinburgh, 1783.

(10) Mr. Burgh maintains, that the comparative sums, contributed by each county towards defraying the public expences, furnish as striking an instance of inequality, as their parliamentary representation.

At WHITCHURCH two representatives are elected by the freeholders, who cannot be above FORTY in number, as THERE ARE NOT MORE THAN A HUNDRED HOUSES IN THE TOWN.

ANDOVER sends two members, who are chosen by a majority consisting of THIRTEEN votes. THE TOWN CONTAINS SIX HUNDRED HOUSES.

NEWTON—two members chosen by A SINGLE ELECTOR—the voters being the mayor and twelve burgeses, who are appointed by the owner of the borough.

OLD SARUM—two members chosen by A SINGLE ELECTOR. In the year 1750, according to Willis, there was BUT ONE HOUSE at Old Sarum. At present that single house is gone; but the owner of the borough appoints a bailiff and six burgeses, to whom he sends his *congé d'élire*. The two members named by them are the representatives of the owner of the borough, who, as well as the proprietor of the borough of Newton, is thus magnificently represented in parliament, while LONDON itself, where there are EIGHT THOUSAND voters, has only FOUR representatives; so that in the balance of the state, TWO men have equal weight with EIGHT THOUSAND.

The two little towns of BOROUGHBRIDGE and ALDBOROUGH are both in one parish, which is the only parish in England that has FOUR representatives.

DEVIZES

DEVIZES sends two members, who are elected by a majority consisting of **SEVENTY-TWO**.

MARLBOROUGH has two representatives, chosen by a majority composed of **TWO** votes; that is to say, by a corporation, consisting of a mayor, and two bailiffs.

By adding up the other little towns and boroughs, it appears, that **TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOUR** members are elected by **FIVE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE** votes. "Now the
 " most numerous meeting of the commons ever known,
 " was on occasion of the debate about Walpole, in
 " the year 1741. There were then five hundred and
 " two members in the house: therefore two hundred
 " and fifty-four comes very near a majority of the na-
 " tional representative."

The greatest part of these **FIVE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE** men, who nominate the legislators of the English people, and give them an unlimited authority over the property of the nation, are not possessed of a foot of land. Add to this, that not a man of these **TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOUR** members, who constitute pretty nearly a moiety of the representatives of the nation, is elected by so many as **THREE HUNDRED** votes—that many of them are returned by less than **TWENTY** electors; who, having no property, are the most likely to be corrupted.

The representation of Scotland is still more extraordinary: it contains **SIXTY-SIX** cities, or burghs, which are entitled to representation in parliament. Before the union, Edinburgh returned to the Scottish parliament **TWO** representatives; and **ONE** representative was sent by each of the other burghs. Thus the estate of burghes, or third estate of the Scottish parliament (11), consisted of **SIXTY-SEVEN** members in all. By the act of union, however, the burghs of Scotland are entitled to send only **FIFTEEN** representatives to the parliament of Great-Britain. Of these the city of Edinburgh elects **ONE**; and the other burghs are divided into fourteen several classes, or districts; **ONE** representative **ONLY** being chosen by each district, for the whole burghs of which the district is composed (12). The election of these fifteen representatives is conducted in this manner:—The representative for Edinburgh is chosen by the town council of that city, consisting of **THIRTY-THREE** members. The representatives for the several districts, into which the other burghs are divided, are each chosen by **FOUR** or **FIVE** commissioners or delegates, **ONE** from each burgh of the district. These delegates are elected by the town councils of the several burghs in the district; but after their election, they are not subject to

(11) The parliament of Scotland was composed of three estates; the clergy—the barons—and the burghes.

(12) These classes, or districts, are each composed of four or five burghs.

the direction or control of the councils, being at full liberty to give their votes in favour of any person they please, and are not accountable to the councils for their conduct. Consequently these delegates must be considered, to all intents and purposes, as the absolute and uncontrollable electors of the representatives for the several districts of burghs. And the council of the burghs in these districts, having only the power of appointing delegates, can be said to have, at best, but an indirect representation in parliament.

These particulars being premised, I shall now give a numerical statement of the representation for the burghs of Scotland.

Burghs.	Representatives.	Electors.
Edinburgh sends to parliament	- - 1	- - - 33
Tain, Dingwall, &c.	- - 1	- - - 5
Inverness, Nairn, &c.	- - 1	- - - 4
Elgin, Banff, &c.	- - 1	- - - 5
Aberdeen, Montrose, &c.	- 1	- - - 5
Perth, Dundee, &c.	- - 1	- - - 5
Anstruther, Pittenweem, &c.	- 1	- - - 5
Dysart, Kirkcaldy, &c.	- 1	- - - 4
Stirling, Inverkeithing, &c.	- 1	- - - 5
Glasgow, Dunbarton, &c.	- 1	- - - 4
Haddington, Jedburgh, &c.	- 1	- - - 5
Linlithgow, Selkirk, &c.	- 1	- - - 4
Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, &c.	1	- - - 5
Wigton, Whithorn, &c.	- 1	- - - 4
Ayr, Irvine, &c.	- - 1	- - - 5

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Hence

Hence it appears, that the representatives for all the burghs of Scotland are chosen by only **NINETY EIGHT ELECTORS**;—though those burghs, at a moderate computation, are supposed to contain about **THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND** inhabitants. There are **THIRTY** representatives for the counties of Scotland, which contain about **TWELVE HUNDRED THOUSAND** inhabitants.—These are facts which need no comment.

In a word, of the **FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHT** representatives of Great-Britain(13), the members for counties are only **ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-ONE**; of whom **FORTY-TWO** are for Scotland and Wales.

SO THAT THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BOROUGHS ARE FOUR TIMES AS MANY AS THOSE OF THE COUNTIES.

“ The

(13) It must be remarked, that the eldest sons of Scotch peers are declared incapable of sitting in the house of commons. But the sons of English peers may sit; so that ten individuals out of one family may be legislators.

The above note, which the author has copied from Mr. Burgh, seems to be erroneous. The eldest sons of Scotch Peers are certainly incapable of sitting in the British house of commons, as the representatives of any shire or borough of Scotland; but it has never been determined, that they are incapable of representing English boroughs or counties; and the borough of Malmshury is at this moment represented by Lord Maitland, the eldest son of the Earl of Lauderdale.—Note of the translator,

“ The British government, therefore,” says Mr. Burgh, “ taking it according to its avowed state, is
 “ neither absolute monarchy nor limited monarchy,
 “ nor aristocracy, nor democracy; nor a mixture of
 “ monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy; but may be
 “ called a PROCHOCRACY—a government of beggars.
 “ For a few beggarly boroughs do avowedly elect the
 “ most important part of the government, the part
 “ which commands the purse.

“ Is this the universally admired, and universally
 “ envied, British constitution ?

“ And what point can be gained by a dissolution of
 “ parliament ? It is a handful of beggars, bribed, or
 “ awed, by the court, or the grandees, that send the
 “ majority of members into the house. Will they
 “ not send back the same men ? Do they dare to send
 “ any others ?”

I have neither any inclination, nor any right, to use the harsh language of Mr. Burgh. None but Englishmen have a right to speak ill of the English. It should seem that writers had sought to console other nations, by telling them of the defects and abuses of the English constitution. But the consolation is like that which slaves, loaded with heavy irons, would receive from hearing the lamentations of men bound with silken cords. The restraint imposed on the latter, leaves them all their sensibility, while the former lose all sentiment. I am neither so unjust, nor so inconsiderate. But I will be bold to say, that the present parliamentary representation of England excludes

all political liberty. *New blood*, said the illustrious Chatham, *must be infused into the constitution*: and the time is, perhaps, arrived, when it most deeply concerns the English to set seriously, and with their natural perseverance, about that important operation. I will add one more observation, because it seems to me not to have been attended to.

The trial of the Dean of St. Asaph at this moment engrosses the public attention. Perhaps the province of the judge, and of the jury, in matters of libel, will be at last ascertained in a country where the liberty of the press is with reason considered as the palladium of all other liberty; and where the only security which the subject now has, is that public spirit which generally actuates juries: though juries do not always think proper, as appears upon the present occasion, to exercise their right, or their power of deciding whether the paper in question be, or be not, a libel. As if men were not bound to make every exertion in their power in the cause of liberty;—as if every defendant, who is accused of having published a libel, will not be continually threatened with some arbitrary stretch of power, if juries leave it to the judges to decide upon his guilt or innocence.

But be this as it may, the subject of this famous trial is a dialogue upon political resistance, which is somewhat abrupt, perhaps, in its transitions; but which does not, at least in my opinion, carry the theory of resistance so far as every man, who has a sound understanding and a free spirit, must desire to see

see it carried. And it is made a question, whether this dialogue be not a libel.

Indeed, if we reflect upon the almost insurmountable difficulties, which a man, whose aversion to falsehoods and to half-truths is nearly equal, and who would avoid alike pusillanimity and falsehood, must encounter in explaining the theory of resistance, even in England, as long as the nation continues to be so unequally represented as it is at present, we cannot be surprised at the great variety of opinions which are entertained on so plain a subject.

Certainly the majority of the nation alone has, or can have, a right to resist the executive power; and, indeed, *resistance* is an improper expression. The nation ought not to resist; it is, and must for ever be, the sovereign. When its intervention is become necessary, it should not *resist*, but *command*. But what is the nation? What is the majority of the nation? How is it to be known? how ascertained?

How embarrassing do these questions become among a people who are so ill represented! How much more embarrassing when one reflects, that by the English constitution, the executive power is an integral part of the legislative power; so that, theoretically speaking, the parliament, that is, two branches of the legislative power, have no right to judge the third!—If the nation alone have a right to resist, if the nation be not represented in parliament, and if resistance be necessary to obtain a fair representation of the nation,
what

what is the situation of the English? How will they be delivered from this circle?

But this is an enquiry which it is not my intention to prosecute: not that I think with Rousseau, that the evil is inseparable from the subject; or with many Englishmen, that a more equal representation is impossible, or even difficult to effect; but because it becomes the English themselves to solve this important problem. I meet with so many difficulties in ascertaining the most trifling fact; and I become every day so much more fully convinced, that to understand any thing, one must have seen it one's self, that I do not, I confess, comprehend the conduct of those writers, who hastily constitute themselves the instructors of foreign nations. It is much, if after having for years studied a country, its institutions, and its manners, one may venture for a few minutes to advise.

All that I purposed, therefore, by this note, was to shew that Dr. Price did not exaggerate; and that one of England's greatest misfortunes is, that its parliamentary representation is very unequal, and one may add, that the parliament is greatly interested that it should continue so. For when one knows, for instance, that a certain member of the house of commons, a noble lord, and a representative of the little borough of Banbury (whose electors are only the sixteen or eighteen persons who compose the corporation, though the borough consists of four or five hundred families), has opposed every improvement

of

of the representation, under the pretext of *his* inviolable respect for the venerable fabric of the sacred constitution of England, one cannot be at a loss to guess what was his meaning, and what ever will be his meaning upon that subject. But if, on the other hand, a sincere friend of liberty were to exclaim, "take the right of election from all these feudal boroughs, which have long ceased to deserve that name, and which are destitute of citizens, which are receptacles of corruption, which contain nothing but mercenaries, nothing but the menial retainers of proud and avaricious aristocratical chiefs, who buy, and are themselves sold;—take from these boroughs their right of election, and increase the number of the electors for counties;" would not the meaning too of this friend of liberty be pretty plain?

N. B. Since the above note was written, the cause of the Dean of St. Asaph has received a solemn decision, in which a majority of the judges of the king's bench have declared, that by law, upon every trial for a libel, the jury are bound, by their oaths, to decide only whether the party accused published the paper in question, and to reserve it to the court to determine, whether the paper be or be not a libel.

Taking it for granted, as a foreigner must do, that this doctrine is the undoubted law of the land, it is clear, notwithstanding all that we have heard, and fondly believed, about English freedom and English juries,

juries, that the liberty of the press is, in this country, a useless privilege; and that the trial by jury is, in questions of the highest importance, a mere matter of form: the English, however, have been hitherto sincere in boasting of their privileges; they deceived themselves: they dreamed that they were possessed of these important birth-rights, till the decision of this fatal cause dispelled the vision, and awakened them to all the gloom of their real situation.

One cannot but congratulate the people of England, that the salutary opinion of the extensive rights of juries was not sooner discovered to be erroneous, and that in the reign of James II. it had such firm hold of the minds of all men, that to its good effects upon the trial of the seven bishops, they are in a great degree indebted for the glorious revolution. The judges of the king's bench, indeed, acknowledge, that, though juries have not a *right* to decide upon the criminality or innocence of the supposed libel, still they have the *power* to do it without punishment, and without a possibility of their judgements being reversed. And as long as this distinction between power and right (which probably nothing but a profound knowledge of the principles of English jurisprudence can render at all intelligible) shall be preserved, the people of this country will have one resource left. For if, upon any future occasion, when the decision by the jury of the question, *whether libel or not*, will preserve the spirit of the constitution, though it offend against the letter of the law, a jury should

should be tempted to deviate from the duty prescribed them by their oaths, in order to rescue out of the hands of power, some brave assertor of the people's right, he must be a severe moralist indeed, who could deny that this was one of the very few cases in which one might exclaim,

Falsehood sublime ! What truth will ever be
So fair, so noble, as to rival thee (14) ?

But whether juries, having lost the right, will long retain the power, and whether liberties can be deemed secure, which are to be defended only by uncommon exertions, and an enthusiasm of public spirit, which many Englishmen, with too much reason, lament they see sinking among them every day, are questions worthy the most serious reflection of the nation.

III.

“ *To preserve this equality, and its consequences, as long*
“ *as possible, some great men (Plato, Sir Thomas More,*
“ *Mr. Wallace, &c.) have proposed plans, &c. p. 188.*

Mr. Wallace, whom many persons will perhaps be surprised to find ranked with Plato and Sir Thomas More, and who, though he had considerable merit, cannot

(14) *Magnanima menzogna ! or, quando è il vero*
Si bello, che si possa à te proporre ?

cannot be called a great man without exaggeration, is very little known, even in his own country. The esteem in which he was held by two of the most distinguished of his contemporaries, David Hume, whom he criticised, and Dr. Price, who has several times spoken of him with encomiums, ought to have given his works a greater reputation than they enjoy.

Hume, in his *Essay on the populousness of ancient nations*, which was printed in the year 1752, maintains that the populousness of the moderns is superior to that of the antients. Mr. Wallace, in a *Dissertation on the numbers of mankind in ancient and modern times*, printed in the year 1753, contends on the contrary; that the ancient nations were the most populous. Hume, in a subsequent edition of his essay, inserted a note, in which he said, “ that his discourse had
 “ been honoured with an answer, full of politeness,
 “ erudition, and good sense; that so learned a refuta-
 “ tion would have made him suspect, that his reason-
 “ ings were entirely overthrown, had he not used the
 “ precaution from the beginning, to keep himself on
 “ the sceptical side . . . that he very willingly ac-
 “ knowledged, that his antagonist had detected many
 “ mistakes, both in his authorities and reasonings,
 “ and that advantage had been taken, in that edition,
 “ of his learned animadversions, and the essay had
 “ been rendered less imperfect than formerly.”

This

This dissertation by Mr. Wallace, does not indeed contain any very sound principles (for it was published at a time when the true principles of population were unknown), but it contains some useful and curious researches.

Mr. Wallace afterwards, in 1761, published an anonymous work, entitled, *Various prospects of mankind, nature, and providence*, which has been spoken of very favourably by Dr. Price.

The four first essays which it contains treat of the defects of society, and of their remedies. Mr. Wallace proposes *the model of a perfect government, not for a single nation only, but for the whole earth.*

A perfect equality amongst all the citizens; a community of goods; moderate and equal labor to all the members of the state; certain seasons for amusement: all children to belong to the state: a public education; a division into little states; a mutual correspondence; a universal language; —such is in gross the plan of Mr. Wallace(15), which, he thinks, may be

(15) Hume has entitled one of his essays, *The idea of a perfect common-wealth*. This tract, which is vastly superior to that of Mr. Wallace, would have had much more success, if the same author's history of England, which is charged with partiality, infidelity, and a bias to arbitrary notions, had not prejudiced the public against the principles of this fine

be executed at the epoch of some violent crisis, or at the present moment, by the foundation of a new colony of Europeans, or, finally, by the slow and gradual, or by the sudden and ^{miraculous}, interposition of providence.

Mr. Wallace believes, that such a government would not only prevent that inequality, which is the source of so many evils, and that total want of principle, which now disgraces mankind, but that it would even temper and subdue all human passions. He foresees no other inconveniences which could result from his project, than the excessive population which it must occasion. "What a miserable catastrophe," exclaims he, "of the most generous of all human systems of government! How dreadfully would the magistrates of such common-wealths find themselves disconcerted at that fatal period, when there was no longer any room for new colonies, and when the earth could produce no further supplies! What expedient could be found out to remedy so great an evil? In such a cruel necessity must there be a law to restrain marriage? Must there, &c. &c."

The

fine writer. To me, notwithstanding, it appears unquestionable, that in this, and in some other of his essays, Hume has proved himself a friend to liberty. It is, however, remarkable, that this philosopher has not, in his idea of a perfect common-wealth, said a word about education, except where he makes a feeble allusion to our universities and our religions.

The author's imagination kindles to such a degree, that he can discover no other remedy to this fatal excess of happiness, than war and death. This idea afflicts and discourages him. He no longer entertains any hopes from the most perfect Utopian systems, whether ancient or modern. He abandons them all, and despairs of mankind.

Alas! let us but have peaceful and prosperous governments; though they be imperfect (for nothing perfect will ever be the work of man); and let us enjoy securely a long interval of peace and happiness, ere the fatal period shall arrive, when the world shall be overstocked with inhabitants. Perhaps this good man, for such his writings, which every where breathe a spirit of philanthropy, justice, and peace, prove him to have been, would have dismissed his fears, if he had reflected, that almost three quarters of the globe are still uncultivated, and promise subsistence during many thousand centuries to the greatest possible increase of population:—that, in all probability, the present state of agriculture does not approach so near to the highest conceivable degree of its perfection, as the first efforts of savage man, tearing up the earth with his nails, do to the progress already made in agriculture; and that, were the enlarged understanding and improved faculties of man, capable of forming a perfect government, he would doubtless discover some innocent means of preventing the problematical evil of too crowded a population.

At the conclusion of the peace of 1762, when certain projectors advised the English ministers to leave the French in possession of Canada, in order that they might check the too rapid increase of the English colonies, the celebrated Dr. Franklin observed, "It is a
 " modest word, this *check*, for massacring men, wo-
 " men, and children; and for all the other horrors
 " of war." It was being very far-sighted indeed, to feel so soon the necessity of checking the excessive population of the English colonies. "But," continues this great man, with that Socratic simplicity which is the peculiar characteristic of his writings, "if it
 " be after all thought necessary to check the growth
 " of our colonies, give me leave to propose a method
 " less cruel. It is a method of which we have an
 " example in scripture. The murder of husbands,
 " of wives, of brothers, sisters and children, whose
 " pleasing society has been for some time enjoyed,
 " affects deeply the respective surviving relations:
 " but grief for the death of a child just born is short,
 " and easily supported. The method I mean is that
 " which was dictated by the Egyptian policy, when
 " the infinite increase of the children of Israel was
 " apprehended as dangerous to the state; and Pha-
 " raoh said unto his people, behold the people of the
 " children of Israel are more and mightier than we;
 " come on, let us deal wisely with them, lest they
 " multiply, and it come to pass, that when there falleth
 " out any war, they join also unto our enemies and
 " fight against us, and so get them up out of the
 " land:—and the king spake unto the Hebrew mid-
 " wives

“ wives, &c. Exodus, chap. I. Let an act of para-
 “ liament then be made, enjoining the colony mid-
 “ wives to stifle, in the birth, every third or fourth
 “ child. By this means you may keep the colonies
 “ to their present size. And if they were under the
 “ hard alternative of submitting to one or the other
 “ of these schemes for checking their growth, I dare
 “ answer for them they would prefer the latter (16).”
 They seem to have found out a much better.

But to return to Mr. Wallace. In the 5th, 6th, and 9th sections of his work, he attacks the system of Maupertuis, who, in his essay on moral philosophy, maintains that, in this world, the sum of evil is greater than that of good; an opinion, which has always appeared to me to be unjust, cruel, and untenable, and which that metaphysician has not been able to temper any otherwise than by his extravagant discovery of the least quantity of action. Did Maupertuis then imagine, that he could console mankind for the pains which they endure, and for the evils which their vices bring upon them, by teaching them an insignificant truth, relative to the laws of motion?

It is not by dint of geometrical truths, were they as sublime, as that, which Maupertuis claims the honour

S 2

of

(16) See *The interest of Great Britain considered with regard to her colonies, and the acquisition of Canada and Guadaloupe*, printed among *The political, miscellaneous, and philosophical pieces* of Dr. Franklin. London, 1779, p. 197.

of having discovered, is trivial(17), that reason can be improved and strengthened, the sensations of pain
 soothed,

(17) Maupertuis is not one of those philosophers who disdain to propound common truths in emphatical language. His great principle of the least quantity of action, which he thinks so much of, that rare discovery of which he boasts with such diverting modesty, amounts to nothing more than this :

There is no motion without a cause. No motion requires more than an adequate cause. No motion can exist with less than an adequate cause ; but where there is a sufficient impulse, motion will instantly take place. It will therefore be caused by the slightest force, or the least action possible, since the moment there is a sufficient impulse, the motion takes place, and every greater impulse is superfluous.

No great effort of genius undoubtedly was necessary to discover these admirable axioms. It is wonderful that in the eighteenth century, they should have been published as discoveries, and still more wonderful that a man of Maupertuis's abilities should think he had discovered in them a stronger proof of the existence of God, than that which is drawn from the wisdom observable in the order of the universe, and in the creation of sensitive and thinking beings. He falls completely into the error which he imputes to other philosophers, of attaching more consequence to their proofs than they actually deserve. His pretended discovery is a mere trifle, or a paralogism, which neither does, nor can prove any thing. It is a truth as common, as that two and two are equal to four, or, that a balance will preponderate by the smallest increase of weight in
 either

soothed, their effects counteracted, and the ill impression, which they might make upon moral ideas, prevented.

S 3

ed.

either scale. The proof which he rejects, such as that of final causes, of the design, power, and wisdom, which appear alike in the general construction of the universe, and in that of its smallest parts, and above all in the formation of intelligent beings, is on the contrary very strong and conclusive; but it is not set off with the learned solemnity of geometry, and therefore seemed to him less striking. Geometricians are great lords, who are very proud of their liveries. But it is more essential to see whether the materials, of which they are composed, be good. The materials of good reasoning, in every science, are metaphysics. But sound metaphysics are not always the endowment of geometricians; and in the work to which I here allude (his *Essai de Cosmologie*) the cosmological part is sensible, but familiar to all the world: the metaphysical part is in the highest degree contemptible.

If any thing can be conceived more ridiculous than the importance which Maupertuis gave to his pretended discovery, it is the dispute which it produced, and the artless simplicity of Koenig, believing that in truth some discovery had been made, claiming the honour of it for his master Leibnitz, and becoming the martyr of his ridiculous claim; and, on the other hand, the indignant rage of Maupertuis, who, to preserve the honour of having discovered the least possible quantity of action, exerts all the powers of his presidency, which, in Prus-

sa,

ed. The author of the *SYSTEME DE LA NATURE* would say "what imports it to me, that Maupertuis is a good geometrician, if he be a despotic and merciless president, and if I be obliged to live in his academy? A beneficent man is, in my opinion, much more estimable, than a being who is learned, but cruel." Maupertuis's philosophy has a worse tendency than that of making men atheists; it tends to make them impious, discontented, and rebellious against the decrees of heaven.

To the pains of the body oppose its pleasures, which, if they be not all equally intense, are infinitely more numerous, and occupy an infinitely longer period, not only in our lives, but in the lives of all sensitive beings. Balance the account; and, if it appear that, every thing considered, the condition of every living thing is good, that the sufferings even of the most wretched of beings are not equal to his enjoyments, what becomes of all the declamation which has been employed upon the evils which afflict the world?

To what a degree does pride vitiate men's judgment! Let us not admire, say they, and even the wisest

sia, is an inferior office of state, to expel poor Kœnig out of the academy. Is it then the fate of all men, from the learned geometrician, and the profound professor of metaphysics, down to the unlettered grenadier, to destroy one another for the merest trifles, of which they have not so much as a distinct idea?

wisest of them—let us not admire, for it is detrimental to us. Or, upon a different occasion, let us admire, for it is our interest Nay, my good friends, forget, I beseech you, your interest for once, and admire, simply, because there is reason for admiration.

Ye atoms of a day, how strange is your presumption! You really believe yourselves to be the monarchs, and the final cause of the universe. For you the earth bears her fruits, animals have existence, and the heavenly bodies are in motion. The dog-star was created (so you are presumptuous enough to believe, and to maintain) that it might add one glimmering taper to the illumination of the night; and the innumerable suns which compose the galaxy, that they might gratify your sight. Your proud imagination destines every thing to your use; even the supreme God of the universe, which it dooms to be born, and to be sacrificed, at its pleasure.

Endued with reason by God, do not imagine him so destitute of that faculty, as to have thus lavished the productions of his omnipotence, merely for one of the frailest of his works. The position of your globe, the limits set to your faculties, the evils with which all your joys are dashed, ought all to convince you that you are not the monarchs of the universe, nor even the most favoured of God. You have no right to claim such a distinction. Be not elevated with pride; but at the same time be not sunk with meanness. You are respectable citizens of one of the

smallest cities of that immense empire which is called the universe. He, who fixed your station, has made it an honourable one, and better for those of your species, than any which you know or can conceive. You are bound to be grateful to him, because he has dispensed to you more good than evil, and has given you infinitely more moments in which you enjoy life, than in which you desire death.

But that benevolence which he has exercised in your favour, and for which you ought to prostrate yourselves at the foot of his throne, has not extended itself to you alone. It has been shed profusely over all those beings who were capable of feeling it; and we know not where, in the great chain of beings, that happy property terminates. We behold it in animals which differ from ourselves only in some degrees of perfection. We may conclude that it exists to some extent in plants to which even affections have not been refused. Whether it extends further, we do not know; but, at least amongst those beings whose sensibility is not doubtful, we see that each feels for itself, that each is indebted to that sensibility for a thousand pleasures, and that each is endowed with organs proper for its preservation, and with an intelligence, which, being incapable of judging of any other faculties than those which belong to its own species, must conceive a high idea of its own importance. We cannot tell to what degree bees, ants, and beavers, and perhaps animals less intelligent

intelligent than these, may think they have a right to despise us.

There is great good sense in the fable of the companions of Ulysses, who, when transformed into beasts, refused to become men again; and in the fiction of Voltaire, in which mice, ducks, turkeys, asses, men and angels are introduced, each species boasting separately *that all was made for them*, while God declares, **THAT HE CREATED EVERY THING FOR HIMSELF.**

This observation only should be added, that, at the same time that God created every thing for himself, he created every thing too for others; and that strange delusion, which makes not only every species prefer itself to all others, but every individual of every species be averse from becoming any other than itself, is not one of the smallest dispensations of his bounty. I have seen many people envy the fortune of the Marquis de Brunoy, but none, that ever would have accepted his fortune, to be the discontented, stupid, restless Brunoy himself. Maupertuis would not have been king of Prussia, and the king of Prussia would not have been Maupertuis. My reader would not, any more than myself, be either the king, or the philosopher; and he who disdains our philosophy would be sorry to exchange situations with us. The porter, who carries our burthens, and the labourer, who toils in our vineyards, would not, for the sake of our ease, sacrifice their vigour and encounter our cares. Every
man

man is therefore, upon the whole, contented with himself and with his station, though every man seeks to improve his station, according to the means which he possesses; and of those means no man is entirely destitute.

If, instead of considering the world as our dominion, where every thing that does not happen to please us seems to be wrong, we would only consider it as that which it really is, a spacious inn, where every guest may be provided with all the necessaries, and even all the comforts of life, by paying his quota; where there are lodgings at every price, because every thing must find its place there, from man, and from beings of a superior order, quite down to the oyster, and even to animals of the lowest class; we should not blame the master of it, who seeks to please all his guests alike, and who cannot prevent some from being a little incommoded in the crowd by their neighbours, Man has, of all beings, the least right to complain of this reciprocal inconvenience; because, with his more enlarged faculties, he, more than any other being, torments his fellow creatures, and all other animals. The number of serpents which have been destroyed by men, is much greater than that of men who have been killed by serpents. That reptile too never wounds but in his own defence, while ferocious man murders for his amusement. Serpents then would despise the philosopher, who maintains that those things, which appear to us to be hurtful, are out of their place in the great order of the universe; or, at best, they would say, that man, who leaves no other creature

creature at rest, ought to be exterminated from the animal creation.

But the serpent would be wrong, as well as the philosopher. The world is not to be estimated according to the interest of any individual, nor even according to the interest of any species: but every species and every individual finds, in the laws of the universe, and in its own faculties, the means of pursuing its own advantage with effect. That what produces the good of all, is the greatest possible good, is a truth which no man of sense ought to conceal from himself. The dangers which surround us are described and exaggerated, while our numerous pleasures are passed over in silence. Our misery is proclaimed: our happiness is forgotten. The world, it is said, displays more vices, crimes, and sufferings, than virtues and enjoyments. But this cannot be true: for the world still endures, and societies still subsist. Whereas, if the evil that affects us were greater than the good, we should soon be annihilated. If there were not more men who respect the rights of others, than who violate them, more fathers who educate, than who expose their children, more wives and husbands who cherish, than who torment each other, more children who love and respect, than who abandon their parents, more men ready to succour, than to destroy their fellow creatures, we should soon perish by each other's hands, and our species could not exist for two generations. But it has existed till now: it has multiplied: it has even enlarged its dominion, at the expence

pence of other species : it still multiplies. There exists then more good than evil, especially to man ; and it would be a base ingratitude indeed, in the most enlightened of the human species, were they to affect an ignorance of the good which they enjoy, and were they negligent in pointing out that good to others.

If these reflections be a *useless* digression, I am to blame in publishing them : but, if it be desirable, that this resigned philosophy, which unfortunately is too simple to flatter the self-love of those who constitute themselves the instructors of mankind, were universally adopted, this note will need no apology, even though it be a digression,

Mr. Wallace, in the five last sections of his work, vindicates providence upon the systems of free-will and necessity, and maintains the doctrine of a future life.

He is certainly a very estimable philosopher. His views indeed are not extensive; his style is diffuse, and his manner common ; but his works will always be read with profit.

IV.

On the chapter upon commerce, p. 190, &c.

THE wisest and most important piece of advice, given by Dr. Price to the Americans, is to distrust and discourage, instead of favouring and inviting, foreign commerce,

commerce. I have enforced his ideas with that warmth, which invincible conviction naturally produces. I have, however, rejected all prohibitions, as infringements of that liberty, which ought to spread its sacred pavilion over every species of commerce, as well as over every individual: but I have not been able to express, in so narrow a compass, the innumerable reflections, which the single word *commerce* excites in my mind. I will take the liberty however to add a few observations on the strange confusion of ideas and expressions, on the immense number of absurd mistakes and chimerical delusions, which a passion for commerce has disseminated among nations. Look at England—where commerce and trade are better understood than in any other country in the world; and where one would expect their effects and influence to be the most studied. Behold what a delirium, what a phrensy, agitates the statesmen of that calculating and thinking nation, whenever commerce, its interests, and its ideal or actual benefits, come in question!

The following observations have been printed in France, in a periodical work, on the tables published in the well-known book of Sir Charles Whitworth, entitled *A state of the trade of Great-Britain in its imports and exports progressively from the year 1697; also of the trade to each particular country, during the above period, distinguishing each year.*

These tables, the author tells us, are taken from the accounts given in to the house of commons every
year

year by the proper officers. If the old custom-house lists were thus digested and published in every civilized country, we should probably derive much information from the particular results, and the comparison of them. This would at least draw some benefit from an institution, certainly very ancient and very general, but the utility of which, at the present day, seems at least very problematical to a great number of speculators.

Nothing can be more dazzling than the object placed by Sir Charles Whitworth before the eyes of his countrymen, as the sum total of his tables. Near five hundred and seventy-four millions of imports, upwards of eight hundred and forty-one millions of exports, consequently two hundred and sixty-eight millions sterling gained by the balance of trade. These calculations deserve our attention.

But first we must divide this great sum into seventy-six parts, to have the average result of each year; since the author includes a period of seventy-six years. We shall find about three million five hundred and twenty-four thousand pounds sterling gained annually by commerce.

At the first view of this calculation, a Frenchman would naturally exclaim; behold how commerce enriches states! England alone gains upwards of three millions and a half sterling every year by the balance of trade.

Before

Before we implicitly grant the consequences, which seem to flow from this first impression, let us examine whether we may not be deceived by some mistakes and erroneous repetitions, which may have crept into these tables.

For instance, when we speak, in England, of the nation, we mean not merely England properly so called, but likewise Scotland, Ireland, and the surrounding islands, of Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, the Isle of Man, &c. together with the English settlements in Africa and America. Are the advantages gained by the merchants of London, and other English trading towns, from the Scotch and the Irish, and those formerly and still gained by them from the American provinces and islands, a benefit to the British dominions? This may well be doubted. For the power of England is composed of the strength and wealth of the three kingdoms; and all the different countries subject to the crown of Great Britain are members of the same body.

If any of our writers were to print a view of the commerce of France, as Sir Charles Whitworth has done of England, and were to take Paris and the Isle of France for a central point, as he has taken London, and England properly so called; if he were to make a column displaying its active and passive commerce with Normandy, Picardy, Brie, Champagne, Burgundy, Orléanois, Beauce, and all the other more distant provinces, Poitou, Brittany, Guienne, Languedoc, Provence, Dauphiny, Alsacia,

Alfacia, Flanders, jumbled together among foreign nations and the French colonies in the three other quarters of the globe, I have little doubt, but that the sum total would exceed the English balance by many thousand millions of our money. But the nation would not be a jot the richer, nor the king more powerful.

For which reason, I am surprised to see inserted in the two hundred and sixty-eight millions sterling, which the nation is said to have gained since the end of the last century; nine million six hundred thousand pounds sterling gained from Ireland, which makes the tenth article of the general table; near six hundred thousand pounds sterling gained from the little islands of Jersey, Guernsey, and Alderney, which form n^o 21, 22, and 23; near a million sterling on the linen sent to the British colonies, n^o 46; and a very large sum on the other articles of trade for the same colonies; which alone take up almost the whole general table from n^o 24 to n^o 60. This sum amounts to about forty-five millions sterling.

All this may well surprise us: for, in whatever point of view it be considered, the gain made by some provinces, at the expence of other provinces in the same empire, will certainly contribute neither to the riches nor to the power of the state, to which they belong: it is taking money out of the left hand, and putting it into the right: and this is a consideration, of which we ought never to lose sight. Besides, is it so very clear, as the author wishes us to imagine, that

the excess of the value of the exports over the imports, is always so much clear gain to a country? To me it seems very doubtful.

The English themselves at this day allow, that they have made large advancements for the purpose of establishing the American colonies. These advancements should consist of a large quantity of goods exported, and given, not sold, by England to America; goods, which consequently run up to a very considerable amount in the table of exports, without any thing to balance it in that of the imports.

These advancements, which since 1697 must have exceeded forty-five millions sterling, have probably enriched the English, pretty much in the same manner as an individual would be enriched by buying an estate very dear, which he should afterwards lose, together with the purchase-money, and the costs of an expensive law-suit.

So that Sir Charles Whitworth, in this instance, has most probably set down as received, what has actually been paid, and has reckoned money, foolishly expended, as clear gain. At all events, the error will create a difference of double the sum. In fact, between throwing away and gaining forty-five millions sterling, there is a difference of ninety millions sterling.

Another article in his general table should have made him sensible of this error; I mean that of *Gibraltar*, which is the seventeenth. In the column

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entitled

entitled *Balance in favour of England*, there are twenty-eight million six hundred thousand pounds sterling, under this article of *Gibraltar*; that is to say, that upwards of twenty-eight millions and a half, in goods or specie, have gone from England to Gibraltar more than have come from Gibraltar to England. Nothing more likely. But how can this be adduced to prove a balance in favour of England?

If all the rocks of Gibraltar had been brought to England, and sold there by the ton at a very high price, they would hardly have produced twenty-eight millions sterling. What possible infatuation could induce this gentleman to believe that his country had gained these twenty-eight millions from this barren mountain? It is clearly money expended.

One very important truth, however, this table certainly does prove; namely, that England has laid out about twenty-eight millions sterling, to keep Gibraltar. This expence, merely in supporting the balance of trade, ought to be subtracted from, instead of being added to, the gain. The difference is upwards of fifty-seven millions and a half sterling.

You have already upwards of a hundred and forty-seven millions sterling to deduct from two hundred and sixty-eight millions sterling. Behold two more articles of the same sort. First, in the supposed balance of two hundred and sixty-eight millions in favour of England, are comprised ninety-six millions sterling, in gold and silver specie, ingots, plate, or
jewels,

jewels, exported; which are found in the custom-house books; because metals of value pay a duty on exportation.

England has neither gold nor silver within herself. Therefore these ninety-six millions sterling had been imported from abroad. They are not to be found in the custom-house books, because they pay nothing on importation. Sir Charles Whitworth admits this, and allows the amount to be deducted.

The last article for our consideration is that of the prizes taken by the English from other nations in time of war. These amount to about seven millions three hundred and seventy-two thousand pounds sterling, since the end of the last century. The author, in placing the value of the prizes in the column of receipts, ought surely to have placed what they cost in the column of expences. I do not mean the whole enormous expences occasioned by the wars which authorised these captures, but at least the expences of building and fitting out the privateers, and the value of the English vessels taken in reprisal(18).

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(18) This is not exact—an error having been occasioned by Sir Charles Whitworth's confusion in the valuation of the prizes. In his table, shewing the state of the prizes, are two columns, one of the imports, another of the exports; part of the wealth taken from the enemy having been consumed in England, and part abroad; so that the remark is
not

Let us then see the result. From a balance of two hundred and sixty-eight millions sterling in favour of England, by means of errors, and articles twice reckoned, it will probably be found necessary, for the above-mentioned irrefragable reasons, to deduct about two hundred and fifty millions and a half sterling.

There will remain seventeen millions and a half sterling, gained by the balance of trade; but gained in the course of seventy-five or seventy-six years, that is to say, about two hundred and thirty thousand pounds sterling gained every year. Let us now make two observations.

First, that the territorial revenue of the provinces which compose the British empire, the net produce of the lands, deducting the expences of their cultivation, certainly amounts to upwards of twenty-five millions sterling a year, taking into consideration the sum devoured by taxes, as well as the clear produce to the land-owners.

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not correctly true. But the numerical result of this inaccurate observation makes no essential difference in the general calculation. Besides, it must be remembered, that the principal object of my note is to prove THE ABSURDITY OF CALCULATING THE SUM GAINED BY THE BALANCE OF TRADE BY THE EXCESS OF THE EXPORTS.

The proportion, then, of the produce of commerce to that of agriculture, even in England, is only as TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY THOUSAND to TWENTY FIVE MILLIONS, *i. e.* as ONE to ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT: yet, in balancing their respective interests, the landed interest and agriculture are ever sacrificed to those of commerce; and when our modern writers speak of the riches and power of England, one would think that commerce composed the sum total, and agriculture was a cypher in the account.

And these two hundred and thirty thousand pounds, this pretended balance of trade, how are they acquired? By prohibitions, by exclusions, by a system of mercantile intolerance and usurpations, supported by five or six great naval wars, and by keeping up a formidable and ruinous fleet.

England has contracted a debt of upwards of one hundred and thirty four millions sterling. The citizens of every condition pay taxes to the annual amount of upwards of five millions two hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling, merely to discharge the interest of this debt. Though every one of them should have a share in the two hundred and thirty thousand pounds a year gained by commerce, which may well be doubted, as far as respects the mere husbandmen and land-owners(19), it would, notwithstanding, follow

(19) According to the latest calculations, the poor's tax in England amounts to three millions sterling; and this

low as a consequence, that they had purchased two hundred and thirty thousand pounds a year for the price of one hundred and thirty four millions sterling, and a yearly payment of five millions two hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling. This is my second reflection.

These results, which well deserve the attention of every statesman, and of every good citizen, make Sir Charles Whitworth's book, and the tables it contains, of infinite value.

For a century past, this mercantile policy has been desolating, and deluging with blood the four quarters of the globe. The balance of trade has been thought the *summum bonum*: and no cruelty has been spared to secure a portion of the treasures, which it was expected to produce.

Such then is the real produce of the balance of trade to that nation, which our political empirics have cried up as the great object of emulation and envy.

Strip this balance of all its chimerical appendages; strike out the repetitions and errors; and see how much

this sum is not enough to subsist the crowds of beggars, that are to be found in the wealthiest nation in Europe. So true it is that commerce enriches but a very small number of citizens. See the *Sketches of the history of man*, Vol. II, p. 45, &c.

much science and wisdom are necessary to sacrifice, perhaps, a million of men, and one hundred and thirty four millions sterling, to procure to the merchants, who dwell among you, about two hundred and thirty thousand pounds a year, clear gain, to divide among each other.

This result of TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY THOUSAND POUNDS STERLING FOR THE ANNUAL BALANCE OF TRADE IN FAVOUR OF ENGLAND (20) may sound strangely

(20) I know, and by no means wish to conceal, that Sir Charles Whitworth's work has in England never been considered in any other light, than as a copy of the custom-house tables; and that their industrious editor is not, among his countrymen, of very high authority. There are numberless errors, which might be pointed out in these tables, and which make some for, and some against his hypothesis.

The instance I am going to adduce is somewhat extraordinary. Smuggling, that species of commerce, which is produced from the war of prohibitions; that salutary commerce, which retards the fall of empires that are devoured by taxes, smuggling, I say, is never once taken into the account! is totally omitted in a calculation of the balance of the British commerce! The single article of tea would amount to an immense sum. The brandy, and other spirituous liquors that are smuggled not only from abroad, but even from Scotland, are beyond calculation. It is the

strangely in the ears of stock-exchange and mercantile politicians; so strangely, that most of the English calculators

the same with tobacco. The sugar, which is exported to receive the drawback, and which is smuggled back into the kingdom, to receive from the consumer the full price of sugars which have paid the duty, is another very considerable object.

Sir Charles Whitworth neglects another consideration, of no small importance. The value of the English imports is calculated with a view to England, and not with a view to the countries where the commodities imported have been purchased. Consequently the imports are valued after the freight, commission, insurance, &c. But the exports are valued as they are found in the warehouses at the English ports, free of all charges; and these charges are, perhaps, a tenth, or even a fifth part of the whole value of the exports, which, therefore, should be deducted from the balance.

There are other equally capital deceptions in these tables. In particular, the balance of trade with the English Antilles deserves no credit. The exports from Jamaica are often not above one half, a third part, or even a quarter of the imports. And the reason is obvious: the land-owners reside in Europe, where they spend in that proportion the produce of their plantations. Jamaica is only half of the English islands. The same remark is applicable to the other half.

With respect to Ireland, he commits an error of a contrary kind, but full as palpable. A great number of Irish reside

calculators will shrug up their shoulders, rather than endeavour to answer it. Here, however, is its answer ;
and

reside in Great-Britain, who are supposed to spend in that kingdom about a million sterling *per annum*.

The men, clothing, provisions, and stores necessary for the fleets, forts, and garrisons of the English, in the different quarters of the world, form a very absurd and exaggerating addition to the tables of the exports. Sir Charles Whitworth puts them down as gains. But these immense expences are so far from being clear profits, that it must at least be very doubtful, whether they be repaid by the advantage of the places garrisoned or victualled ; and even by the returns of commerce from those places in time of peace.

Are the exports, absorbed by Africa for the purchase of negroes, a benefit, in the eyes either of policy, or of humanity ? What shall we say to the East-Indies ? If the commerce of importation be unfavorable in the English system, why does the British nation lavish her exertions and treasure, to deluge with blood a country into which she imports infinitely more than she exports from thence ; and, what is still more remarkable, in which some of the principal of these imports turn into a rivalry with the industry of Great Britain ? I cannot tell, whether she be preparing for the apparently imminent and inevitable loss of India : but I should much doubt that she will have any thing which she can reasonably lament on that score, except her own conduct in that country.

and perhaps the consequence, which naturally and necessarily flows from it, is worthy of some slight attention,

Let the annual exports of England be -	12,000,000 ^{£.}
Let the raw materials cost the nation -	4,000,000
The gain by the labour is - - - -	<u>8,000,000</u>

If England were to employ this sum total of eight millions sterling in paying for the importation of provisions for the subsistence of the inhabitants, then would her industry be directed to the useful end of supporting 1,200,000 citizens from foreign supplies. This would be the *acme* of her prosperity; and yet she would have no pecuniary balance in her favour; and that would be the very reason why she would then enjoy the greatest possible happiness.

So that it is an idle speculative idea of narrow-minded commercial writers, to calculate the balance of trade in our favour, by THAT EXCESS OF OUR EXPORTS OVER OUR IMPORTS, that excess being in fact a loss.

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One might make a volume of observations, in details of this nature, upon Sir Charles Whitworth's tables: but I never meant to undertake a review of his work. I have only mentioned it in this note, for the purpose of attacking, by a striking instance, the absurdity of the prevailing notion, of calculating the profits of trade by the excess of the exports over the imports.

The true, and the only balance of trade in favour of a nation, consists in a circumstance which is obvious to the view of every man of discernment, in supporting by its industry, on provisions brought from abroad, a sixth part of its inhabitants, in a country otherwise insufficient for that purpose.

So extravagant are the ideas entertained about the **BALANCE OF TRADE**, that the English, and the commercial stock-jobbers in general, wish to have **A LARGE BALANCE OF MONEY REMAINING**; whereas commerce is of no use to the nations, who have occasion for it, except in proportion, as, with an industry carried to its utmost extent, **THEY HAVE NOT A FARTHING OF MONEY REMAINING AS A BALANCE.**

So that England, in gaining **TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY THOUSAND POUNDS STERLING** by her industry, is not only neither less happy nor less wise, than if Sir Charles Whitworth's calculation of **THREE MILLIONS AND A HALF STERLING** were realised; but she is even **FOURTEEN TIMES AS WISE AND AS HAPPY.**

And, indeed, if, by the balance of trade, she had accumulated three millions and a half sterling every year for a century, as Sir Charles Whitworth supposes, she would now possess, over and above her native coin, if I may use the expression, three hundred and fifty millions sterling. And, alas! what industry
would

would she then exert? How many guineas would it now cost to polish a steel button at London? How would England be able to disgorge these torrents of gold? Then would this dazzling, this estimable, this so many ways respectable nation, but which seems to have hitherto had no ideas of the blessings of peace, be obliged to excite and cherish wars for the sake of unburthening itself from such an intolerable weight of gold, which would deprive it of activity and of life. Then would all the kingdoms of the world be forced to league together, for the purpose of effacing it from the book of life, as the common enemy of every other people, and unable to subsist without bloodshed.

RARA LOCORUM FELICITATE, QUÆ SENTIRE QUÆ
VÊLIS, ET QUÆ SENTIAS DICERE, LICET. *Tacit.*

THE END.



